



CAREFREE PATH OF DREAMS

BOOK 02

The Plagiarist

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Carefree Path of Dreams

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by

The Plagiarist

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Synopsis

This is the story of a boy who lived a secluded life in the mountains, tending his farm, rearing his fish, and dreaming his dreams. Eh? Did I suddenly conquer all worlds and become the big boss? Or am I still in a dream?

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Chapter 101: The Fight

"What are you intending to do, Prefecture Master?"

Lu Renjia was gentlemanly, and there was a light fragrance coming from him, which had the ability to calm the others down.

His eyes were like lightning and shot right at Liu Yan, interrogating him.

"Kacha! Kacha!"

The sound of armour dragging across the floor could be heard from outside. Numerous Secluded Mountain Prefecture soldiers flooded the hall.

Liu Yan lifted his eyebrow and smiled. "It isn't about what I want to do, but you, Master Lu. What do you intend to do?"

As he spoke, he appeared stricter. "By getting closer to my prefecture's sects and Prefecture soldiers just to hastily sit in my seat? You think I can't live long? You are trying to bully me?"

"Rumble!"

The rage of a spiritual knight was not to be taken lightly!

In the hall, Shi Yutong could feel an immense spiritual pressure which was almost suffocating.

Looking at Liu Yan, he was seated in his seat, but green flames appeared and seemed to be surrounding him, and were slowly growing.

"Impossible!"

Lu Renjia took out a small bronze cauldron and placed it in front of himself. He was not ashamed of anything and became serious. "Old Liu... Why are you still so strong? Must be... What treasures have you consumed to lengthen your lifespan?"

"That's right!"

Liu Yan's voice became deeper, with a mocking tone. "Hehe... I was fated to receive a Fire Dragon Fruit. Not only does this fruit complement me perfectly, it also had the ability to lengthen my lifespan... If I've used this to make it into the 'Red Dragon Pill', it's ability would increase fivefold. However, I knew that you would be greedy, so why would I trust you to do this for me?"

Shi Yutong's heart became heavy after hearing this.

If not for his old age, Liu Yan would still be the number one spiritual knight in the entire Secluded Mountain Prefecture! Due to his planning, despite the fact that his enemy had improved tremendously, he was able to keep the secret and eventually trick them with the news that he was dying!

'This words are not meant for Master Lu, but for the rest of us Sect Masters!'

With this, Shi Yutong had a question in mind. 'Even if he kneeled down to surrender, I wonder how will things end up? It seems that he still had to let out his position and live in privacy for the rest of his life!'

'It seems that this is still more worth than the Sect being destroyed by the Secluded Mountain Prefecture soldiers.'

The pretty Sect Master suddenly changed her expression, as though she was fighting a mental battle. The two Wu Zongs on both sides seemed to be in the same predicament.

"Don't be fooled by this Old Liu!"

Lu Renjia rolled his eyes and said, "Eating the Fire Dragon Fruit raw can only increase his lifespan by a century! This old fool doesn't have too many years to live..."

He looked at Liu Yan with a sinister look, with no intention to conceal his motive to kill. "Furthermore... Even if you are willing to use your life to pit against us, in the end, all of us will die together!"

"Even if we have to die together, I will still exterminate this bunch of you!"

Liu Yan became fierce and waved his hand. A streak of green fire shot out like a dragon and aimed straight for Lu Renjia.

"Fight!"

Lu Renjia became extremely serious and pushed the cauldron forward.

"Rumble!"

An invisible ripple of energy dispersed, and the green flame dragon was destroyed into embers, which flew in all directions.

"Ah!"

A soldier wearing a Thousand Year Chilled Metal Armour could not dodge in time and was struck by an ember, lighting his shoulder in green flames.

"Hong! Hong!"

In the next moment, his entire person became a green human torch. He shrieked and died in an instant.

'Liu Yan's fire-type spiritual spells were even scarier than before... Even martial artists of the 4 Heavenly Gates don't stand a chance!'

Witnessing this scene, Shi Yutong was shocked to her wits and glanced at her lowly-skilled sect disciples, who were all shivering in fear. She was glad not to have brought her own disciple along. Otherwise, she might not be able to leave this predicament.

"It seems that everyone is unwilling to accept my gracious offer..."

Liu Yan looked at Shi Yutong and the other Sect Masters and shook his head. Suddenly, he gave a deafening shout. "The soldiers of Secluded Mountain Prefecture, do hear this. The Spirit Returning Sect, Bone Melting Sect and the Yellow Brothers sect are

now traitors. Kill every single one!"

"Yes, Master!"

A commotion was heard and the clanging of knives and swords outside was deafening.

"Haha..... Sect Master Shi, I, Old Niu, have always wanted to get closer to you, and now I finally have the chance!"

The capital leader of Niu Capital laughed, wore a helmet with bullhorns and approached her.

"If I had a choice, I would not want to oppose you Prefecture Master, but..."

Shi Yutong was unwilling but made her choice.

Since he had already done it and was found out, any hesitation would only quicken his death. The only solution he had was to carry on what he was doing.

"Haha... You guys have made the right choice!"

Lu Renjia laughed. "After this, I will not forget any of you. And as for the promised spiritual pills, I will deliver two times more!"

"Lu Renjia!"

Liu Yan turned ferocious and slowly stood up.

"Hong! Hong!"

Balls of green flames appeared around his body, burning brightly in mid-air. There was a continuous stream of heatwave coming from him. "Do you still think that you stand a chance?"

He still feared this alchemy master.

Although his combat skills may not be good, his alchemy skills helped him developed many diplomatic ties.

"You would never guess what my secret move would be! Even though you surpassed my expectations today, that is all you are going to be!"

Lu Renjia became speechless. "Tiancan, Dique, bring Ling Yin away!"

"Yes, master!"

Two Wu Zongs suddenly stood beside Ling Yin and escorted her out.

"None of you will leave this place today! He! The elemental forces of nature, listen to me! Green Dragon Dance! Prosperity be in the world!"

Liu Yan recited his mantra, and spiritual imprints appeared on his spiritual gown.

"Hong! Hong!"

Nine balls of green flame surrounded him, and suddenly evolved into claws. A green dragon formed from the balls of flame and struck towards Ling Yin.

"I am your opponent!"

Lu Renjia frowned and threw out a few pills.

"Peng!"

A red pill collided with a white pill in mid-air and exploded. A grey fog appeared, which constrained the fire dragon.

Liu Yan could see that the fire dragon within the fog had lost its spirituality. It stopped moving and began to slowly shrink in size.

"Good! You have lived in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture for almost twenty years and it is only today that I get to see your true ability!"

Liu Yan began to spew fire out of his eyes. "Hopefully you do not disappoint me!"

"Hong! Hong!"

In a short moment, the green flames covered the entire hall!

...

"Eh?"

Outside the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City.

Fang Yuan, who was on the carriage, turned his head around and took a quick glance in the direction of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City.

The tremor of the spiritual force was way beyond the capabilities of a spiritual disciple; it was obvious that two spiritual knights were engaged in a fight.

"Master?"

Yu Xinlou and Huang Fu Renhe rushed over, saw Fang Yuan staring in the direction of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City, and followed suit.

"Rumble!"

At that moment, It seemed as though a flame started to grow in the Prefecture Master's mansion. Thick smoke rose into the sky like a chimney.

"That is... the direction of the Prefecture Master's mansion!"

Yu Xinlou was dumbfounded. "Today is the City Master's birthday, and yet they close the four gates to the city, and even something like that could happen within the city...'

"Are these green flames from the legendary Secluded Mountain Prefecture City Master's spiritual spells? I've heard that he is skilled in fire-type spiritual spells, and is a totally different level!"

Huang Fu Renhe observed the increasingly chaotic city, and made eye contact with Yu Xinlou; he broke out in cold sweat.

If not for Fang Yuan who brought them out of the city, they would be the ones trapped inside, desperate. They might even be implicated to death.

"Rumble!"

Another deep tremor was heard.

To have travelled such a long distance, Fang Yuan understood that the two spiritual knights had used their spiritual force to strike a hard one on each other.

Indeed, when he looked back, he saw something like a roof flying in mid-air, and suddenly it broke apart into flames. Screams were heard where it landed.

"Oh..... This is how spiritual knights fight with each other?"

Fang Yuan was shocked to see such a fight.

Even though he had become a dream disciple, he could not command his elemental force as he wished as he was not a dream master yet.

Seeing how one's own elemental force could affect nature in such fearsome means, he knew what to expect in the future.

"Elemental force... It's not far from me!"

Fang Yuan clenched his fist, in silence.

In terms of martial arts, he had already broken through the 11th Gate. What was left for him was the final Heaven Gate and Wu Zong to break through before he could finally attain Wu Zong.

As for his journey as a dream disciple, he had also entered the final stages and was only a few steps away from truly being able to control his own dream world.

"It's just... My skillset is specific, and the destructive power of a dream master can never be on par with that of a spiritual knight..."

Fang Yuan sighed, and suddenly called Yu Xinlou and Huang Fu Renhe over. "It seems that the only one capable of going against the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master is that alchemy master, Master Lu?"

"Although I have never seen him personally, I have heard that his alchemy skills are superb, and well known throughout the entire

Xia Country... My previous master is no match for him!"

Huang Fu Renhe looked agonized and said.

He explored the ends of the world and his exposure was rather broad.

"The influence of the Prefecture City is rather strong, but the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master had many connections with the outside world, and external allies might help him out!"

Yu Xinlou shook his head.

"Hmm... That's true. The destruction that we witnessed just now, could it be made by several spiritual knights and Wu Zongs together? Isn't it a good chance to see what we can loot amidst the chaos?"

Fang Yuan made a guess after hearing him said that.

'To loot from the chaos, we will still need a formidable party. Otherwise, we would be killing ourselves!'

"Let's go! We need to rush!"

"Fang Yuan did not hesitate and ordered them.

"Yes, master!"

Yu Xinlou instructed for the carriage to move on. As he looked back at the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City, he was filled with mixed emotions.

Seeing his hometown being destroyed and feeling sad was secondary; it was more of a worry.

The entire Secluded Mountain Prefecture would change!

Chapter 102: The Peak Level

"Elemental force.....Only spiritual knights, Wu Zong, and other similar level experts can awaken the ability to use this power that of the heavens and earth..."

The carriage was sparkling.

Inside the carriage, Fang Yuan seemed to have closed his eyes to rest, but in fact, he was finding out the secrets behind his elemental force.

"There are roughly two systems of power in this world. One is magic and the other is physique...The path of magic would be arduous at the start because it depends on one's potential. Only spiritual disciples, alchemy disciples, dream disciples or the likes can develop elemental force under the guidance of a master!"

"Physique, on the other hand, is slightly different. I can be described as the supplement of magic. In the 12 Gates of martial arts, one will start from the 3 Prosperous Gates, before moving onto 2 Peaceful Gates and then the 3 Perilous Gates, and lastly the 4 Heavenly Gates in this order. This order helps to build one's foundation for obtaining elemental force. However, the first 8 gates would only help to condition one's body while only the 4 Heavenly Gates would improve one's magical energy gradually. Hence, although one may have reached the peak level of the 12th Gate, one may not have reached one's full potential to become Wu Zong!"

"Of course, I am different from them and I can choose to go by both paths of magic and physique. Martial arts is just a form of self-defence in the early stages, and also a way for me to build up my foundations.....The 12th Gate is the final preparation for me to make a last breakthrough which is completely dependent on my magical energy!"

The trip to the Prefecture City was beneficial for Fang Yuan.

Even though he could only watch the moves of a spiritual knight from afar and feel the spiritual pressure, it made him slightly more optimistic of a breakthrough.

This was not because of his gifts, but rather, his accumulation in experience.

"It looks like when these skills have reached a later stage, they cannot be depended on proficiency points to be improved. Rather they depended on self-realisation and maybe some sort of opportunities....."

Fang Yuan glanced at his stats window and noticed that his Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique's proficiency points had reached 99.99% in Grade 11!

Along with this self-realisation, the last percentage of improvement needed was finally fulfilled!

Suddenly, Fang Yuan closed both of his eyes.

"Piak!"

He could feel a soft sound coming from the middle of his forehead.

However, this sound was not real. It was the tremor from his sea of consciousness!

"Hoo....."

Fang Yuan exhaled gently while he held on to his forehead.

From previous breakthroughs, he could feel his inner force surging around his whole body. This time, it was totally different. He could feel a slight dizziness and a swell in his head as if a brick had just been squeezed into his consciousness.

"Such feeling I'm getting.....must be due to my body's inability to adapt to the sudden surge in magical energy....."

He looked at his stats window again and saw the changes.

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 8.0

Spirit: 7.9

Magic: 5.5

Profession: Dream Disciple

Cultivation: [Martial Artist (12th Gate)]

Technique: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)], [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 12)] (Limit reached)

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 4)]"

Fang Yuan was surprised by the changes. "There are not much increments for my [Essence] and [Spirit], but my [Magic] has improved by 1!"

Such great improvements were way more than what the Questioning Heart Tea could do.

However, there were also side effects from this vast improvement and these side effects were quite scary. Hence, Fang Yuan had to clear his mind to allow his body to get used to the increase in magical energy.

After a while, his energy was at its peak and he became very alert.

He could feel that his thinking speed was much faster than before and he was very satisfied.

"Even though I had the magical energy of an average person from the start, but with the cultivation from my master, my strong foundations, the help of the Questioning Heart Tea and the breakthroughs in martial arts, I am now comparable to the other talents!"

"With my current magical energy, I should be considered gifted among all other normal spiritual disciples!"

His mind was clear and Fang Yuan stretched himself. He then

continued to check on other areas.

"[Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 12)] -- You have mastered this technique to its peak level and the level is similar to the creator of this technique! However, due to the disadvantage of this technique, this technique cannot be further improved to condense elemental force!"

The system also identified that the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique had reached its peak and there would be no further improvements.

This meant that if Fang Yuan still wished to continue to make a breakthrough in his martial arts, he had to change his cultivation to either the Xuan Yin Heart Technique, the Spirit Returning Heart Manual or other similar high levelled techniques.

"This system is useless....Can't it improve or optimise my techniques?"

Fang Yuan murmured and stroked his chin. "No.....the system's abilities seem to come from my level of comprehension....."

Where did martial arts originate from in this world?

Martial arts were created by man, of course! Since one could create techniques for Wu Zong, Fang Yuan believed that he could similarly do so.

A real expert would probably be able to raise his Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique to Grade 13, Grade 14 or even Grade 15!

Of course, with his current level of comprehension and experience, the chances of him going crazy from improving his technique was very high, since he was cultivating without any help.

"Even if I enter the dream world to experiment, with my current level of cultivation as a dream disciple, I'm afraid I'm not even able to simulate inner force properly, let alone elemental force!"

Death in the dream world didn't mean actual death. Therefore, he could simulate many different environments to try out.

If he was capable enough, he could build another Xia country in the dream world!

With this convenience, high cultivation levelled dream masters often improved their techniques in martial arts beyond the original peak levels. Furthermore, they could also provide services for optimisation of martial arts for other martial artists. Of course, these services would cost a bomb.

With Fang Yuan's current level of cultivation, he would not be able to simulate at such a level yet.

"However.....this is also another type of cultivation. At least it would be much more convenient to reproduce my actual physical body in the dream world, and give it inner force....."

The ability for a martial artist to understand their own body condition would be rather useful.

However, if Fang Yuan had the ability to simulate everything in the dream world and allowed himself to go crazy from improving the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique to Grade 13 for a few thousand times in the dream world, he would already have made a breakthrough in his cultivation of becoming a dream master, thereby developing dream elemental force.

Hence, the effectiveness of this method to aid his martial arts was still debatable.

"However, if this method was solely for the purpose of the cultivation to become a dream master, it could still be done. I shall remember this!"

He added another to-do item in his checklist silently in his mind and opened the curtains. The sunlight was blinding, causing him to squint his eyes.

"How long have I been meditating? Where are we now?"

Fang Yuan looked at the coachman and asked him.

"Sir!"

The coachman was from the White Cloud Business Council and was one Yu Xinlou's men. As such, he would not be rude to Fang Yuan and answered him politely. "You have meditated for half a day. We are currently in Qinghe County and in two days time, we should be able to reach Qingye City!"

"Very good, get Huang Fu Renhe and Yu Xinlou to come over here!"

Fang Yuan got out of the carriage and randomly asked one of the horse riders dressed in green to get off the horse. Fang Yuan then took over, as the horse obediently allowed him to train his riding skills.

"Sir!"

Not long after, Yu Xinlou and Huang Fu Renhe came over. Yu Xinlou's eyebrows were furrowed and his face looked sad.

"Oh? From your facial expression, it looks like you have gotten the news of the current situation in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City!"

Fang Yuan's eyes then brightened up.

Even though he had decided not to be involved in the happenings in the Prefecture City, he still sent a few men to find out about the current situation, and it was worth it.

"One of the riders from my business council has just returned with news. The current situation in the Prefecture City is quite bad..."

Mentioning this, Yu Xinlou's eyes went red. "It was the misfortune on the day of the birthday banquet. The fire spread through the entire city, costing the lives of many innocent civilians living there. Now, many civilians are trying to escape the city, and

my riders have seen a few of their ex-colleagues who were also escaping. The Prefecture City is now a big battlefield!"

"What?"

Fang Yuan was surprised and asked, "Lu Renjia is that powerful?"

"You can't imagine how many connections an alchemy master like Lu Renjia has!"

Huang Fu Renhe gave a wry grin and said, "Of all the 6 counties in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, 3 of them clearly voiced out their support for Lu Renjia. Even one capital leader from the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was convinced to join Lu Renjia's side and remained undercover. When the time is ripe, the Prefecture Master's side will go down!"

"Even so, I don't believe that the Prefecture Master will lose in his own territory. It doesn't matter if his men were dead. Ultimately, what would be the outcome of the fight between the leaders? And what about the Wu Zongs?"

Fang Yuan frowned and asked.

Of course, he was only interested in Liu Yan and Lu Renjia.

"Such information is rarely disclosed and no one knows the truth. There are only rumours everywhere...."

Yu Xinlou shook his head and said, "I have heard that this Prefecture Master is holding back. Even though his life is coming to an end, he is still holding back, with the intention to capture everyone who opposes him once and for all. However, he did not expect Lu Renjia to come up with an ultimatum..... Furthermore, both parties are recruiting reinforcements from external parties. The final outcome will lead to both sides being severely weakened. However, as long as the leaders of both parties are alive, I'm afraid the war will last!"

As he spoke, his face gave a worried look.

The war in the city had caused much sufferings and chaos. The ones suffering the most was the civilians.

Escaping to Qinghe County did not mean that one would be safe from the heat of the battle.

"Hmm.....The downfall of both sides.....This alchemy master is unexpectedly capable!"

Liu Yan was actually the most highly skilled in the entire Secluded Mountain Prefecture. However, Lu Renjia, who was just an alchemy master, could fight against him to such a stage, shocking Fang Yuan. Fang Yuan then asked, "What about Shi Yutong?"

Yu Xinlou shook his head and said, "Spirit Returning Sect is one of the 3 sects who had rebelled. However, I haven't heard any news about the whereabouts of Shi Yutong. She probably managed to escape successfully!"

Fang Yuan had expected that anyway.

With the cunningness of Shi Yutong, it would be strange if she didn't manage to escape.

"It looks like....this world is going to get even more chaotic!"

He looked at the end of the pathway ahead and sighed. "Pass down the order to tell everyone to move faster! Otherwise, by then, it will be harder for us to return amidst the chaos if the Spirit Returning decides to gather their men to join in the fight."

Chapter 103: Pill Making

It was eight years since the Xia Country opened up to business from other countries.

Lu Renjia created chaos by betraying the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, and even recruited the help of an evil spiritual knight, and ended up badly hurt together with Liu Yan. Qinghe County, Cangshui County and Jushi County declared to pull out of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture's governance, and under Lu Renjia's command.

Of course, all these didn't affect Fang Yuan.

With the Zhou Family and others as the local families under him, the White Cloud Business Council had a smooth transition into Qingye City; Fang Yuan did not need to worry about the small issues.

He left Huang Fu Renhe in the secluded valley and made him comfortable, before riding the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and arriving at the Green Peak spiritual land.

"Phew... The air here is the best. It is so much different as compared to the air outside..."

The spiritual land was filled with spiritual energy. Fang Yuan unknowingly took a few deep breaths and appeared drunk with power.

"If not for the things I have to settle in the outside world, living here for a long period of time would be like a deity living in heaven..."

He sighed and clenched his fist.

The chaos in the Secluded Mountains Prefecture urgently required strong martial artists as protection.

In terms of martial arts, he had already reached the peak for the

Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique. Unless he changed his cultivation to another type of martial arts, he would have no hope in breaking through to Wu Zong.

However, the Spirit Returning Heart Manual and the Xuan Yin Heart Technique were both profound. Without the hindrance of the 12 Gates, and to train to reach the level of the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique would be extremely hard.

"The good thing is that I have another path to take. Based on my prediction, the creation of the 12 Golden Gates is to cover up for the shortcomings of normal humans... Since I have overflowing magical energy, my journey to become a dream master would be a smooth-sailing one!"

If he could break through to obtain elemental force, then he would be the only one in the entire Xia Country who would be able to oppose the Spirit Returning Sect and other Sects!

"What a pity... I have not sent the Flame Jade Rice for an appraisal!"

Fang Yuan took out a handful of flame-red rice grains, with regret in his eyes.

After the trip to the Secluded Mountain Court, he now knew the value of the higher tiered spiritual rice. It might even be more valuable than the Questioning Heart Tea.

This was because there was only one Questioning Heart Tea Tree, but on the other hand, the rice could be planted many times and be resold to earn back the money.

With the valuable plants in his hands, Fang Yuan did not dare to expose what he had, especially after seeing the situation at the Prefecture; he did not want to involve the alchemy masters and spiritual knights.

"The good thing was that I managed to appraise a few spiritual objects, bought a whole bunch of new spiritual seeds, and obtained

two new helpers. I should be rather influential now, albeit small..."

Fang Yuan went to take a look at the Questioning Heart Tea and the spiritual bamboo shoots. The Questioning Heart Tea was growing well, with the prospects of another season of tea leaves being able to be harvested. As for the bamboo shoots, the shoots remained small, which made Fang Yuan roll his eyes.

Based on the maturity period of the spiritual bamboo, even if he used his spiritual fertilizer, it would be hundred years later before it would mature.

But then again, if he could harvest around ten bamboo fruits, be it changing to another type of martial arts or by harnessing brute force to break through to Wu Zong, it would be so much more helpful.

"It seems that I have to become a dream master to obtain Master's next piece of inheritance..."

Fang Yuan went to the red-eyed white king bird's nest to check that the nest was alright, and glanced at the growing wisteria. He nodded in satisfaction.

"Chirp..."

Suddenly, a shriek came from the cave which broke the silence. It attracted Fang Yuan's attention to the red-eyed white king bird.

Although it appeared sluggish, its eyes remained ferocious and full of stubbornness. Fang Yuan knew that unless a miracle happened, it was almost impossible to tame it.

"You seem to be quite energetic. Hmm... I shall not feed you then..."

Although this bird refused to eat, Fang Yuan still had other ideas. Previously, he used underhand means to subdue it but was lost for words as it did not appear any less fierce than before. He went up to the straw pavilion, poured out every spiritual seed he bought and began reading through the planting manual.

"The Black Jade Rice and Green Striped Rice are nothing much, I can just directly sow them in the spiritual farm... Their effects are similar to that of the Vermilion Jade Rice, and at most I'll just have new flavours to try!"

"The Bone Quenching Flower can destroy one's bones and tendons, and complements the Three Star Fruit perfectly. If I plant them together, I can increase my produce by a few folds!"

"The Sickle Grass and Serrated Flower are the most troublesome. Other than requiring a specific type of land, it still feeds on blood!"

...

After a long while, Fang Yuan closed the manual, his eyebrows slightly raised.

Blood-fed meant consuming the bones, flesh and blood of wild animals. If these two spiritual plants did not get the blood they require, their growth would be hindered and they might not even germinate, making the plants feel carnivorous and barbaric.

Of course, these two spiritual plants were not to be eaten or made into pills; they were for protection.

"They are similar to plants like the Pitcher Plant and the Venus Flytrap... The only thing is that the Sickle Grass and Serrated Flowers are slightly more brutal; their prey are wild beasts or even humans!"

Of course, the normal Sickle Grass had at most a serrated edge like a knife. If a normal person came into contact with it, his flesh would be cut and he would bleed profusely, causing him to die in a gruesome way. As for martial artists, especially high-levelled martial artists, they would easily dodge these plants, just as for the Serrated Flower.

But Fang Yuan didn't intend for these normal spiritual plants to protect his home.

He bought these seeds to produce them in large quantities, so as

to increase their chances of evolving their special traits. Hopefully, they would evolve into even more fearsome spiritual plants, and together with the hypnotizing fog around the Green Peak spiritual land, it would be able to guard against even the strongest 4 Heavenly Gate martial artists!

To produce large quantities of spiritual plants would be almost impossible to do in the small farm at the secluded valley; he could only go ahead with the plan at the Green Peak spiritual land. Everything had to be done by Fang Yuan personally.

As for the farm at the secluded valley, a few farmers already raised the problem of the soil getting less and less fertile.

If Fang Yuan still refused to reveal the secret of the spiritual fertilizer, the next season's Vermilion Jade Rice harvest would be much lesser, and eventually, it would lead to too many farmers at the farm.

"This is not too bad... At least I can dismiss those thoughts of greed! It would be even more beneficial during times of war."

Fang Yuan stroked his chin and started to worry.

Fighting a war is all about resources, especially the long-standing wars. One should not execute the decisive move as the first move, otherwise, the entire war would deplete all the resources available.

To a martial artist, doctor, herbs and storage of spiritual objects, a war was a test to all of these.

"What a coincidence that Qinghe County was named as one of the betrayal counties now in chaos. It is not a matter of whether it will spread, but that it will surely spread! Unless one had enough influence from the start, otherwise trying to control it would be to remove the insignificant powers!"

Fang Yuan slowly understood as he looked in the direction of the county.

If he guessed correctly, he would be able to face of Shi Yutong the

next time round.

"Based on my current stage of cultivation, it is still not enough, and I am still not there yet!"

He was lost in his thoughts...

...

Chaos ensued in the outside world, but it did not seem to have spread to the secluded valley yet.

The grass was lush, the insects and birds were making their noise, the farmers were farming and the servants were washing clothes; the entire scene was one of tranquillity.

Unknowingly, a few days went by.

In the pavilion, Fang Yuan wore his normal clothing and was sitting with Huang Fu Renhe. Both of them were looking at the stove in front.

"The skill of alchemy is all-encompassing. The art of lighting fire is already very profound, and normal people might not even be able to comprehend it in their lifetime..."

Huang Fu Renhe explained, and at the same time added a few animal charcoals underneath the stove.

This was a valued possession brought here personally by Zhou Wenwu. There was only a hint of burnt smell, and every piece was delicately carved into animal shapes. They were extremely valuable and were sold by the piece.

However, Huang Fu Renhe treated it like garbage and didn't even blink an eye as he threw it into the fire.

"Hong! Hong!"

The fire grew larger, and the green flames licked the green stove. A strong fragrance filled the air.

"An alchemy master would use spiritual fire to make their pills. I

am useless and can only use normal fire as a replacement, which is much less efficient and would make a whole lot of difference..."

Huang Fu Renhe blushed, and timed it right before lifting the stove. "It's done!"

White smoke rose into the sky, and as Fang Yuan channelled his energy into his eyes, he could see a puddle of liquid medicine at the bottom of the furnace.

Huang Fu Renhe's face turned red and was totally engrossed in his role. He began the extraction, purification and evaporation process - This was not how the alchemy masters would describe it, but to Fang Yuan, this was what he saw.

After the filtered medicine evaporated into crystals, what appeared in front of Huang Fu Renhe was many piles of yellow, fragrant and seemingly tasty powder.

"This is Spiritual Grain Powder. It can be consumed directly, and after eating it, one would not feel hungry for three days. However, it harms one's digestive system, and therefore is not considered top grade..."

Huang Fu Renhe passed the medicinal powder to Fang Yuan, but his face was full of regret. "Based on my ability, I could possibly make Combat Ration Pellets in the future, but forget about Royal Valley Pill..."

"Alchemy Master?"

Fang Yuan thought of the Questioning Heart Tea and smiled cheekily. "Don't give up so soon, you might be able to do it in the future!"

Powder, Pellet and Pills were the three types of medicine, and their medicinal powers were in increasing order. It was also how pharmacist and alchemy masters proved their own worth.

Using the same ingredients to make the pills, the Spiritual Grain Powder could last for three days but would harm the digestive

system, while the Combat Ration Pill could last for 7 days. As for Royal Valley Pill, it was a common food source for high-levelled cultivators who planned on going into closed-door cultivation for long periods. A prolonged period of consumption would strengthen one's body, which led to some highly-skilled martial artist giving up on food and eating spiritual pills instead, to strengthen their foundation.

But for Huang Fu Renhe, he could only forcibly produce Combat Ration Pellets from spiritual grains; this was because he had no help from spiritual fire and therefore could not attain the level of an alchemy master.

"You're talking about learning martial arts? I can't do it!"

Huang Fu Renhe laughed. "I've tried this path before, but I have no potential for it and I could spend my life training but will not be able to harness inner force."

He was dumbfounded, clenched his teeth, and was feeling determined again. "My lord saved my life and Lanruo's, and even took us in. I have nothing to hide. In alchemy, other than controlling the fire, the most important is to understand the properties of every ingredient and be highly skilled in appraising them... I am useless and have not accomplished much in this field, but I have a gift for you, master!"

As he spoke, he loosened his belt and retrieved something stuck in between, and passed it to Fang Yuan.

"This is... a piece of jade?!"

Fang Yuan was surprised and pleased at the same time. He knew that this person had totally given his trust to him.

"This is indeed a piece of jade... This is from my master... I took it from him, but it was a pity that I was unable to see its contents..."

Huang Fu Renhe blushed and explained.

Chapter 104: Exaction

"I had spent much energy looking for this piece of jade in the past, but who would've guessed that it would appear so effortlessly!"

Inside the room, Fang Yuan slowly put the piece of jade down, feeling relieved.

"The thing that I had wanted most came to me in such a way....."

He shook his head, with a slight happiness in his heart.

According to what Huang Fu Renhe said, many years ago, he was being ill-treated and was under extreme pressure; there was no way he could endure. Taking an opportunity, he escaped with this piece of jade to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture.

However, his magical energy was not great enough to see through the piece of jade to know its secrets.

To Fang Yuan, however, it was a piece of cake.

<<Spiritual Recordings>>!

This was the title of the paragraph inscribed in the piece of jade. It was the elementary book for potential alchemy masters. The book not only had recordings of the characteristics, medicinal effects and methods of handling different types of spiritual objects, it also included a special way to appraise spiritual objects, aiding alchemy masters in determining the quality of spiritual objects, if they were poisonous, etc.

After all, there were many weird and strange spiritual objects present in this world and it was impossible for the inscription to cover every single one of them.

"Of course, the most valuable pieces of information will be the explanation by alchemy masters themselves, as well as the methods of handling different types of spiritual

ingredients.....This inscription should be considered very precious to Huang Fu Renhe!"

Fang Yuan thought about it before deciding to pass on the information from the Spiritual Recordings to Huang Fu Renhe. Ultimately, this piece of jade was from him.

"Unfortunately, Renhe didn't know about the preciousness of this object. If he had passed this jade to Lanruo, that girl should be able to see some of the secrets in it, and of course.....that would also mean that the jade would not come to me!"

He felt fortunate, and at the same time, a little worried.

The mysterious spiritual knight or spiritual disciple who wanted to kidnap Lanruo was also a problem.

Of course, he had already exterminated the Wild Wolves Gang. It would be hard for the spiritual knight to track him down.

Being such a gifted girl, Fang Yuan was not willing to give her up.

"I cannot easily pass on the cultivation of a dream master. However, I still have a few other spiritual knight techniques with me....."

Letting his thoughts run wild, he pondered. "It will be beneficial for me to train a few loyal subordinates. Of course, as much as possible, I shouldn't let her learn the Blood Magic Manual. Just the thought of it spooks me....."

"Thinking about this, as part of the secluded valley faction, we can have anything we want. If I need people, I can get them. If I need spiritual ingredients, I can also get them. We now have a doctor, a pharmacist, a martial artist and a certain level of influence, and therefore should be considered the most powerful in Qingye City. If I was the Sect Head of the Spirit Returning Sect, even if I only knew a little about the secluded valley, I would still have to ask them for help in times of war....."

Fang Yuan stroked his chin and was speechless.

He was in a different position and hence, his perspective and attitude in seeing things were very different.

Since he was part of the secluded valley, he wouldn't wish to see the Spirit Returning Sect having their way and becoming powerful at the expense of the suffering of others.

"Master! They are already here!"

While Fang Yuan was in deep thoughts, Zhang Sheng called to him from outside.

"Direct them to the main hall. I will be there soon!"

Fang Yuan opened the door and saw Zhang Sheng carrying a broom.

Under the care of Fang Yuan, and with the help of spiritual ingredients, Zhang Sheng's Dantian recovered. He had re-obtained his inner force and reinstated his status as a considerably skilled martial artist.

In the main hall of the secluded valley.

Zhou Wenwu, Yu Xinlou and Huang Fu Renhe were waiting in there.

Huang Fu Renhe looked like he had no worries and was enjoying his tea. Yu Xinlou seemed a little worried and Zhou Wenwu was the most uneasy one.

"Here comes Sir!?"

Seeing the arrival of Fang Yuan, the three of them got up and greeted him.

"Hmm!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head to acknowledge them. He then sat in his chair and waved his hand.

Seeing this, Zhang Sheng closed the doors to the main hall and guarded outside. With his skills, even martial artists of the 4

Heavenly Gates could not sneak up upon them.

"You may speak now. Did something happened at the Spirit Returning Sect?"

Fang Yuan came straight to the point.

"You are correct. The Spirit Returning Sect had given an order for all cities in Qinghe County to be on alert. Soldiers from the Spirit Returning Sect are now deployed everywhere, and every family in the county are expected to contribute and help out in any way they can!"

Zhou Wenwu gave a wry grin.

The way he mentioned about the Spirit Returning Sect showed that he was unhappy with the sect.

"Oh? What did they blackmail the three of you for?"

Seeing this, Fang Yuan became interested.

"Every big household in the Qingye City will have to give 100 taels of gold and all the spiritual food they have. The households will also have to provide their most powerful martial artists to be under the direct command of the city master!"

Zhou Wenwu's face was black.

Previously, things were improving back in the Zhou family. However, with this order from the sect, his family would be forced to their limits, and even he, an inner force expert, would have to be conscripted since he was the most highly skilled in his family, which explained his expression.

"The situation for my family is slightly better than Brother Zhou's!"

Yu Xinlou forced a laughter. "I was ordered to give them some money and food supplies, and some of my business shops to the temporary city master....."

"Since all of you were affected, I guess it is a matter of time the

secluded valley will be blackmailed too..."

Fang Yuan murmured and suddenly, he asked, "A temporary city master? What about the previous county leader?"

The previous county leader was a good old man. He was kind, and it was probably due to the fact that he did not have real power and authority over the county. As long as things were not too chaotic or going out of hand, he would always be the forgiving and kind old man, which made him the favourite among the rich and powerful.

However, since the situation in Qinghe County was different now, the previous system of bureaucracy was no longer relevant. Hence, the county leader, together with the name of his appointment, had to be changed.

"City master?! This name sounds like a mercenary!"

Fang Yuan curled his mouth and said, "Why? Why haven't they ask me to give up anything?"

"This is expected!"

Zhou Wenwu added. "Your influence in the Qinghe County is bigger than ours. Furthermore, you are not living in the city and have no business or tradings there. Since you can walk away from this easily, the city master would not dare to bother you much....."

"Master, Little Pearl says that we have a female guest!"

Zhang Sheng voice was calm and deep, frightening Zhou Wenwu a little.

Even though Zhou Wenwu knew that Fang Yuan had taken in a cleaner, from his voice, it seemed that this cleaner's inner force was powerful, and might have surpassed himself.

"A female guest? Who is she?"

Fang Yuan glanced at Zhou Wenwu and had a premonition.

Zhang Sheng then went to have a few words with Little Pearl,

before his deep voice came again. "She is from the Lin family. Lin Leiyue!"

"It's really her!"

Fang Yuan had expected her. "You three, take your leave! Bring her in!"

"Yes, Master!"

The three of them answered together and left. Not long after, Little Pearl brought the female guest in and quickly served her tea. After which, Little Pearl left.

"Miss Lin, please have a seat!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand and stayed calm.

Lin Leiyue stared right at him, in shock. She could feel that he had changed too much, even exceeding her expectations for him.

From the confident look Fang Yuan gave, it was a level of prestige that he could only attain from being at a high cultivation level for a long period of time and the ability to take a life without blinking his eye. Even though she had made a breakthrough in the inner force, she would still fear him.

"Even though my secluded valley is a little remote, I still have some good tea for my guests to enjoy. Please!"

Fang Yuan lifted his teacup and took a sip.

The tea that was used to serve the guests was not spiritual tea. However, it was still good and fragrant.

"Good tea!"

Lin Leiyue took a sip and her eyes glittered. She then looked at Fang Yuan with a bit of disappointment and determination. "Brother Fang, I guess you already know the purpose of my visit?"

"Sigh..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and gave a wry grin. "It is the Spirit

Returning Sect's business to take full control over the country. What has that got to do with the secluded valley?"

"There is a saying that, a land in a country belongs to the king, and the people living in the land are the people of the king. Even though the secluded valley is not geographically in Qingye City, it is still under our jurisdiction. Would you disagree with this point?"

Lin Leiyue gave a strong rebuttal.

At that moment, a thought went through her mind. 'I am saying this is for your own good. If we end up fighting and causing the sect head to take action, I will not be able to answer to Master Wenxin.....'

Thinking about the amount of effort she had put in to persuade her Master, Shi Yutong and how Fang Yuan was not recognising her effort, she was a little pissed.

"This is true..."

Fang Yuan touched his nose and looked at Lin Leiyue without an expression. "And what will the Spirit Returning Sect want from me?"

"The spiritual rice, of course!"

Lin Leiyue bit her teeth and said, "At least 660 pounds of it. Of course, the Spirit Returning Sect will not be getting it for free. We will buy it from you at market price. Also, since you have impressive medicine skills, I will also have to ask you to relocate to the Qingye City. This is also for your own safety, in case you get injured by robbers at night. Of course, the sect will need your help to treat the injured members of the sect during the war..."

"After everything is over, the sect will allow you to choose the next three generations of the city master of Qingye City. How does this sound?"

After she had spoken, she looked at Fang Yuan, hopeful. The conditions that she had given him were much much better

compared to the others.

"Hmm....."

Inside, Fang Yuan laughed silently and intentionally gave a look of hesitation. "This is such a hard decision to make, I will need some time to consider....."

He had to live up to his title as the doctor who could work miracles.

As long as he didn't show that he wanted to relocate to Secluded Mountain Prefecture and join the other side, Shi Yutong would not dare to pressure Fang Yuan to the limits.

'He still needs to consider?'

Lin Leiyue became even more unhappy. She got up and said, "You have 5 days to consider, and I have fought for this deal for you. If we don't hear from you after 5 days, it will no longer be me looking for you!"

After her threatening words, she glanced at the back of the hall and noticed a few people hiding behind, before giving a bow and left.

"Hehe.....Lin Leiyue, this little girl..... her tone is so different now after being a junior sect leader for a few days....."

Fang Yuan touched his chin and felt a toothache. "She's too fierce!"

"We are useless!"

At the back, the three of them came out blushing.

"I cannot blame you three. Zhou Wenwu, I'm afraid that you were already followed as you made your way to the secluded valley...."

Fang Yuan exhaled a long breath and was under no pressure.

After all, even if Shi Yutong came personally, he would be able to

escape even if he couldn't defeat her.

He was not in a desperate situation, which was why he had nothing to worry.

However, if he really lost his subordinates and his business, he could always hire more people and rebuild the business. There was nothing to be worried about.

Of course, that would be the worst-case scenario. For now, it would still be best to keep his subordinates and his business.

Chapter 105: Farming

"Elder Han!"

As Lin Leiyue walked out of the secluded valley, a shadow followed her.

However, it seemed that she had already predicted it, and therefore her expression did not change. "Thank you for coming personally to settle this!"

"Hehe..."

Elder Han shook his head. He was already completely recovered by now and got back the calmness a Martial Artist (11th Gate) should have. However, he knew that he could not go head-on against the secluded valley. "The secluded valley has many secrets, especially Fang Yuan himself. Within the entire Sect, I'm afraid only the Sect Master can infiltrate successfully..."

"If what you said is true, then Fang Yuan's cultivation level is... 4 Heavenly Gates?"

There was shock in Lin Leiyue's eyes.

After being allies with Lu Renjia, the alchemy master had to bear with the pain and gave them a sizeable amount of spiritual pills in an attempt to improve their relations; Elder Han and Lin Leiyue both benefited from it, with one being able to recover successfully and the other able to break through the next gate.

However, as compared to Fang Yuan, Fang Yuan's improvement was still more shocking.

"Even I'll have to admit that Fang Yuan is gifted... I can no longer see what's going on in the secluded valley with the addition of that spiritual beast!"

Elder Han shook his head in dismay. After getting rid of the strong opposition, the secluded valley could actually be

comparable to the Spirit Returning Sect.

After shock came fear.

"The Spirit Returning Sect kept a low profile, which led to the opposing powers being developed slowly... We could use this chance to teach them a lesson and get rid of them!"

He did not try to hide his motive.

On the battlefield, all it would take was an order and he could let martial artists die themselves, without using underhand means.

Only when the opposing powers within the county become lesser would the Spirit Returning Sect have the freedom to do whatever it wants.

And as for the secluded valley, it was indeed a miracle. Without much notice, it had developed so much over such a short period of time.

However, it still didn't matter much. With the Sect Master in charge, using her ability as a 12th Gate Martial Artist at her peak, it would be as simple as jumping over a wall.

The difference between Wu Zong and the normal martial artist was immeasurable; it was like comparing Heaven and Earth!

"How would Master deal with the situation..."

Lin Leiyue stopped and looked back at the secluded valley once more. Suddenly, her heartbeat became faster. She did not want to see Brother Fang reach this point of no return, but at the same time, she felt immense relief. She was resolute and walked away.

Both of them were extremely quick and disappeared into the forest within moments.

The serenity and tranquillity of the forest were intoxicating.

After a long while, Fang Yuan appeared and looked indifferent. "They even had to send Elder Han to spy on the secluded valley, so it seems that there is no other person capable enough in the Sect

already!"

"Unless... Shi Yutong?"

...

After Fang Yuan returned to the secluded valley, even more news came in.

This rebellion went to the extremes. Not only did Qinghe County, Cangshui County and Jushi County leave the Secluded Mountain Prefecture's jurisdiction, they were led by the Spirit Returning Sect, Bone Melting Sect and Yellow Brothers Sect respectively to come together to form a large army of over 10,000 troops. Additionally, external forces joined in as well, and Lu Renjia became the undisputed alliance leader. He directly issued the challenge to Liu Yan without regard for any reputation.

As for the Xia royal family, and the other two prefectures, they would have to wait and see. Even if they tried guessing, they could only send out highly-skilled martial artists in disguise and had to be cautious.

Fang Yuan did not know the happenings in the other two counties, but in Qinghe County, the Spirit Returning Sect was putting in an effort to eradicate the rebels and remove those families who were loyal to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. This was all expected.

There was news that three entire families were eradicated, and they plundered a large amount of resources. The other families who knew of this lived in fear, afraid of being the next family to be dealt with.

From all these, Fang Yuan could predict that he did not have much time left.

However, there was a piece of news which made Fang Yuan wary.

"Lu Renjia could recruit the help of a mysterious spiritual knight, and this spiritual knight has blood-red light all over him; he must

have the assistance of the Blood Dragon, which explained why he could suck the blood essence of 3 or 4 Heavenly Gate Martial Artists and 5 Inner Force Martial Artists at one go and that was extremely scary..."

"This description... Why does it sound so much like the Blood Magic Manual, could it be that this person is related to the Blood Killer?"

Thinking of this, he ended his speculations about Lu Renjia.

"If I create trouble for the Spirit Returning Sect now, I would greatly hurt their battle strength. It would become hard for Shi Yutong to take control of the entire county and unite all the forces together... By sending Elder Han and her other direct disciples all around already revealed her intention, but..."

If Fang Yuan really wanted to kill, then even two Elder Hans could not save their own lives.

However, killing mindlessly did him no good and was therefore not what he would do.

"Keeping them alive would buy me at least five days more..."

To a normal martial artist, it was impossible to gather opposition support and fight against the Spirit Returning Sect in just a mere 5 days, but to Fang Yuan, it was slightly more possible. He just had to dream.

...

Green Peak spiritual land.

Within the straw pavilion.

Fang Yuan placed a stone basin in front of him, and in it full of clear water. There were a few red dots suspended in the water.

Taking a closer look would reveal that the red dots were actually grains of Flame Jade Rice, swirling in the basin of water, at it seemed that there was a layer of gold that had yet to come off.

"Go!"

With the wave of his finger, he exerted a force and the water mixed with a flame-red colour flew out, landing on a bamboo paper placed at one side. It grew upwards quickly, forming a trace of red glow.

Fang Yuan took up the piece of paper and examined it.

"Based on the method for identifying poisons recorded in <<Spiritual Recordings>>, I can now confirm that this spiritual rice is not poisonous. Using the water refinement method, I can observe from the paper that there is a hint of gold in the red. Its fire-type properties are strongest, but in it, there is a hidden metallic property as well, how unexpected... At the end, the trace is 1.6 inches long, which shows that its spirituality is of the higher tier of Yellow Grade. Because it is a spiritual rice, maybe it can be placed under the Mystery Grade?"

The method of appraising as described in this <<Spiritual Recordings>> was founded by alchemy masters who realised that a vast variety of spiritual items existed.

And in it, the spiritual materials were classified into Heaven, Earth, Mystery and Yellow.

Based on the description in <<Spiritual Recordings>>, the Vermilion Jade Rice, Emerald Grass, and even the Bamboo fruit and the Icy Fire Jialan were all of Yellow grade, and were just slightly above average.

As for the Flame Jade Rice, Questioning Heart Tea and the Vermilion Fruit, they were more extraordinary and could be classified under Mystery grade.

"The Flame Jade Rice's effects might not be better than that of the Icy Fire Jialan and were at the higher end of the Yellow Grade. However, since it could be harvested every season and stored in large quantities, its value could go up and therefore could be

classified as Mysterious Grade... As for the Questioning Heart Tea and the Vermilion fruit, both of them are undisputedly of Mystery Grade..." As for the Questioning Heart Tea and the Vermilion fruit, both of them are undisputed..."

"After appraising the grade of the Flame Jade Rice and knowing its qualities, I can now produce it in large scales and start consuming it..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head, picked up the shell of the Flame Jade Rice, went outside and fed it to the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

As the Black Eagle ate it, it wailed in happiness.

"The Flame Jade Rice is a fire-type plant. If Liu Yan or other fire-type spiritual knights know of this plant, they would do all they can in their power to get it and consume it every day. Its benefits are countless, but to me, it would only aid me if I chose to cultivate fire-type techniques in the future..."

The Flame Jade Rice he brought here to appraise was of a small quantity, and Fang Yuan was too lazy to cook it. He gave it all to the Iron-tailed Black Eagle to enjoy.

Afterwards, he went to a newly allocated spiritual farm, and grain by grain planted it in.

[Botany (Level 4)] was indeed impressive. Fang Yuan's natural actions made the action of sowing seeds even more delicate.

"If you want to enjoy such good rice next season, remember to properly guard this spiritual farm, and don't let anyone destroy it, understand?"

Fang Yuan stroked the Iron-tailed Black Eagle's head, as though it was instructing it.

After trying it out for itself, it would surely pay more attention to guard the spiritual farm.

Looking up, he realised that it was noon.

Fang Yuan stopped farming and cooked a full pot of Vermilion Jade Rice. He also instructed the Iron-tailed Black Eagle to catch two fresh fishes and smoked them for lunch.

The water quality in the spiritual land was rather good, and the fishes that came from it were fat and fresh. By using smoke to remove the fish's stench, the fish meat became crispy on the outside and soft on the inside. As he tore the fish, the meat and bone separated easily, and it was simply delicious. It was the perfect lunch.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Fang Yuan was enjoying his lunch, while the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was flapping its wings in unsatisfaction, as though it deserved more.

After trying the Flame Jade Rice, it was used to it and eating the Vermilion Jade Rice was a torture for it.

"Haha..."

Seeing how human-like the Black Eagle was, Fang Yuan laughed uncontrollably.

After a full meal, Fang Yuan returned to the spiritual farm and started to plan. "Following which, I will have to focus on the Flame Jade Rice! The Black Jade Rice, Green Striped Rice are just new flavours, while the Bone Quenching Flower and Three Star Fruit are not as useful. Maybe I can pass some to my servants for them to start growing them as well. Of course, the most important are still the Sickie Grass and Serrated Flower!"

Fang Yuan had high hopes for these two aggressive spiritual plants. He specially instructed the Iron-tailed Black Eagle to hunt for some wild animals and started to prepare the blood for these plants.

"Other spiritual plants thrive with spiritual water and spiritual fertilizer, but these two spiritual plants do not have requirements

as for what type of soil, instead they need to be blood-fed and fertilized with flesh and bones..."

Fang Yuan specially chose a location far from the original spiritual farm and opened up a narrow but long plantation.

This was not only in consideration of the original spiritual farm but also for the growth of these two spiritual plants.

"After all, these spiritual plants are predators, and therefore they should have a larger area to themselves so that they can experience hunting for prey by themselves. That would also save me a lot of trouble!"

There were quite a number of wild animals in this spiritual land and it was sufficient for the growth of these two spiritual plants.

"Whoosh!"

Fang Yuan stirred a wooden bucket and used a gourd to scoop out a serving of blood. He watered it on the gourd, and the spiritual farm became a 'blood farm'. After which, he slowly planted the seeds one by one.

"Since I am using flesh as the fertilizer, they definitely will grow to become ferocious monsters!"

He had a strong feeling that with the increased chances of the special traits evolving that came with his [Botany (Level 4)], this farm would bring him a lot of surprises.

Chapter 106: The Sweep

Fang Yuan sat cross-legged inside the meditation room, holding the jade manual passed to him by the dream master. He had a serious expression on his face.

"The path to become a spiritual knight is made up of only a huge single step! However, spiritual disciples, alchemy disciples and dream disciples are only comparable to Earth Gate martial artists, harnessing only miniature elemental force... Only by breaking through would they obtain elemental force!"

Although he was a dream disciple and held just the basics of elemental force, along with the dream master's consistent and accumulative training, his martial prowess had improved tremendously, considering he was not even a competent fighter at the start.

Comparing with the blood killer who was at a similar level as a spiritual disciple, he originally bragged that he had already mastered blood elemental force, but it turned out that he was just trying to impress others. If he had really mastered blood elemental force, he would have killed Fang Yuan instantly within the first move.

Even so, the blood killer's blood elemental force was still very powerful and lethal. The incident affected Fang Yuan tremendously.

As for now, Fang Yuan was extremely determined to become a dream master to fully control and master elemental force.

"To become a dream master, I have to be true to myself. I am only able to truly master elemental force when I am able to be the master of my own imaginary world!"

"If I had all these powers, fighting the Spirit Returning Sect would be a piece of cake."

Fang Yuan breathed in deeply and began meditating. He allowed his soul to wander into a faraway and unknown realm as he shut his eyes.

...

World of Qianyuan, Mainland Tianyuan.

"Oh...It's still this place again!"

During the appearance earlier, Fang Yuan regained his soul and he could tell that he was in the imaginary world.

"To be a dream master, I need to be in complete control of this world of my imagination. For now, I have only accomplished half of it..."

Fang Yuan looked at both of his hands and activated all his senses.

Feeling an abundance of magical energy and a tingling sense of connection with the heaven and earth, Fang Yuan knew then that his skills had improved again.

Sadly, everything that happened in this imaginary world did not reflect reality.

"Disperse!"

With this thought, the original immense power he felt disappeared instantly as he returned to his original self.

As he recounted the internal messages from the real world, every nerve in his system and his internal strength rose within his body. The energies within him activated and created a storm within his body, momentarily creating a semblance of a miniature elemental energy formed by the merging of the yin and yang forces.

After a moment, the heavenly gate opened, and Fang Yuan immediately became a full level 12 martial arts expert.

"Eagle Claw Technique!"

Fang Yuan shut his eyes and his right hand thrust forward.

"Slash!"

In the direction which Fang Yuan shot out his hand, trees in the pathway of his technique split from the centre. The cuts where the trees split open were as smooth as the surface of a mirror. Fang Yuan's power was greater than in the real world!

However, Fang Yuan was not satisfied, "It's too unrealistic!"

The combat power of a dream master is relatively weak at the beginning. After becoming a dream master, the ultimate goal was to achieve the Prominent Divine Stage!

Prominent Divine Stage?

One's Mind could affect matter and consciousness could affect reality!

Only the dream masters who were capable of actualising objects from the dream world into the real world were worthy to rule, and they can do anything!

Of course, the path to the Prominent Divine Stage was extremely difficult. It was never easy to create objects from nothing!

Therefore, the first thing a dream master had to master would be the laws of reality. A shortcut could be created if a dream world could be moulded to obey and mimic the real world!

Nonetheless, at his current stage, Fang Yuan was far from being able to do such a thing.

After all, he was still unfamiliar with the laws of reality, and needed to accumulate experience.

Even his body's physical composition of meridians in his dream world was still far from his actual body's composition.

"How could I even think of trying to elucidate further grades of the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique with such a weak foundation?"

Fang Yuan shook his head in frustration.

The inability to allow his body in the imaginary world to completely merge and combine with the one in the real world indicated a problem for Fang Yuan. It meant that whatever he could master in this world could not be brought over into the real world as it would likely cause very detrimental effects that could cause a gruesome death should he attempt to do so.

"It seems like... the merging of martial arts powers from the imaginary world to the real world is still very much a work in progress! Is it possible that brute strength is the only way to achieve this?"

As he was deep in thought, several immensely powerful spiritual wills swept by in terror.

"It's that demon!"

"The Apocalyptic Demon is here!"

"Run! Hurry!"

Within several kilometres of Fang Yuan, immortal cultivators were in complete chaos as panic gripped the area. It seemed as though a catastrophe was about to hit.

"Am I that terrifying?"

Fang Yuan caressed his face, feeling slightly troubled.

All he did was to completely wipe out Green Cloud Sect. He could not believe that doing so would give him such a horrific reputation.

However, from the perspectives of these immortal cultivators, Fang Yuan did not just wipe out a major sect. He even took down the most powerful immortal elders of the sect and killed them. This gave him his ferocious and brutal reputation!

"All of these developed from my cluttered thoughts and will continue to evolve by itself..."

Seeing this, Fang Yuan felt deeply relieved.

To take control of the entire imaginary world was in fact his own personal aim. He was not willing to make any compromise to achieve this aim.

He smiled himself and walked forward, paying no attention to the chaos around him.

"Bang!"

Suddenly, the scene in front of him changed.

The original mountainous environment now became masked by a thick fog. This drastic change now seemed to contain several other small imaginary worlds.

As these arrays became suppressed, Fang Yuan was also planted back at his original location.

"Hmm...Just because you guys are able to find this array, do you really think it can stop me?"

Fang Yuan smiled flippantly as his line of sight pierced through the array, looking at the several immortal behind it.

"This time, to take you down, the Tribulation Stage grandmasters from Heaven's Element, Earth's Branches, East's Victory and South's Departure have all came together. The grandmasters from the higher realm have also spared no effort to make their way here, and brought with them the precious and rare Delicate Xuan Huang Array. This array can split the heaven and earth and is considered a rare treasure. It is blessed by the Xuan Huan energy, and can take you down regardless if you are formidable demon from other realms!"

These immensely confident voices rang out continuously from outside the array.

"An extremely powerful gem you say?"

Fang Yuan scoffed and stepped forward suddenly.

"Bang!"

The array changed instantly. Huge bolts of lightning flashed out on the ground and struck out in all directions. All the little imaginary worlds unexpectedly disappeared into little pockets of forces, coalescing as they sped towards Fang Yuan.

Under such an array, it would be extremely difficult for even an immortal cultivator from the higher realms to survive through this!

"I said...I demand light!"

Fang Yuan's thunderous voice shook the imaginary world he was in.

"Shoo!"

Just as he shouted, a ray of light really appeared.

This ray of light was not very bright, but it burned. It was like the first ray of light in a world of eternal darkness. It was unbelievably penetrating and sweeping.

"Snap! Snap!"

Wherever the light passed through, it showed complete devastation and ruin. Even though one sought to completely extinguish all the vile and pernicious forces in this world, they could only slowly melt away under this light.

"Bang!"

After a series of explosions, a huge hole emerged. Through it, one could barely see the blue skies and fluffy white clouds of the imaginary world.

"Impossible!"

The immortals from the upper realms who came to fight off Fang Yuan shouted out in shock and disbelief.

"The most powerful weapon? It has no effect on me!"

Fang Yuan sighed and stretched out both his arms in front of

him. Instantly, all the rays of light coalesced on his arms. All the flying rubble caused by the Delicate Xuan Huang Array merged into a crystal luopan and landed on his palm.

As the fog dispersed, it revealed the unfamiliar surroundings as well as the elders and from the upper realms who came to fight Fang Yuan. All of them had the look of utter disbelief and shock.

"How is this possible?"

"This was the most precious and powerful weapon in the world, how did it get defeated and destroyed so easily? It was indestructible!"

"The gem that had suppressed by powers is lost. Could this be god's will?"

...

The immortals looked on in horror and uncertainty at Fang Yuan.

"Enough!"

Fang Yuan shouted coldly. This brought about a deathly silence.

"How dare you come down to this realm out of your own accords? Prepare to face the consequences!"

Fang Yuan narrowed his eyes and glared at a few elders who were obviously guilty of this crime and said, "All of you are guilty, accept your punishment!"

"Heavenly Punishment?"

A few immortals were taken aback. At the same time, a panel of white jade door opened above their heads. When it opened, several bolts of lightning flashed out and struck them.

"Is this... The tribulation to become a deity? Didn't we live through that 42,000 years ago? Why is it starting again?"

One immortal pulled out his moustache in disbelief.

"Do not panic, it might be an illusion to trick us into a trap!"

"Snap! Snap!"

These highly experienced and skilled immortals were also very tenacious. After being calming down, many began taking out their immortal weapons and starting probing.

Almost immediately, a frightening flash of magical lightning struck down and hit a shiny immortal sword.

With a sickening noise, the sword was cracked from the middle.

Its owner who was spiritually connected to the weapon lost the colour from his face and spat out a mouthful of slightly purplish blood, saying, "Not good! It's real!"

"You people could enjoy your freedom after you became immortals. Why suffer the heavenly tribulation?"

Rays of lightning flashed in all directions and the ground trembled. Amidst this complete catastrophe, a few immortals were forced to desperation and executed their most powerful techniques in an attempt to resist.

This was not like a virus. One could not gain immunity just by getting hit once.

Just like a knife wound, it was not possible that just because a victim had a scar from a knife attack meant that he was no longer afraid of getting attacked by a knife again.

Specifically talking about this heavenly tribulation, this was the most feared and horrifying punishment of all. Even the immortals feared this.

"This demon...could even manipulate the heavens!"

"This demon is undefeatable and could even manipulate the heavens...This is either a major catastrophe or an apocalypse!"

Seeing the rest of the immortals suffer and perish in the chaos, the veterans from the previous disaster they suffered 42,000 years

ago looked on in submission to their fate.

"The immortal world is the immortal world and the normal world is the normal word. We have already put in so much effort and work and reached this level, why must we still control the events in the world we left behind?"

Fang Yuan looked on as the last bolt of lightning struck down on an immortal which caused him to break into a fit of hysteria. Fang Yuan grumbled silently, disappointed that the rules of this world and the universe were the constructs of his own thinking.

"Okay, now that the external people are gone, it's time to deal with the situation here!"

As Fang Yuan looked at the suffering immortals, he broke into a smile. This made him look all the more menacing to them.

Chapter 107: Control

"What do you want, demon?"

An immortal cultivator in the Tribulation Stage stood out, as though he had a great sense of justice.

"You're noisy!"

Fang Yuan took a glance and flicked his fingers.

"Snap!"

The next moment shocked many grandmasters who were in the Tribulation Stage. The immortal cultivator's cultivation was slowly stripped off, from the Tribulation Stage to Magic-fusing, then Magic-melting, then Magic-splitting, then Elemental Infant Stage....and then finally, he had nothing left of his cultivation and was back to a normal person.

"You....."

An Immortal Cultivator who had made a breakthrough could originally extend his lifespan.

However, since his cultivation was stripped off, the previously middle-aged looking immortal cultivator had transformed into a white-haired old man with full of wrinkles.

He stretched his thin fingers as though they were chicken claws. Before he could say a word, he fainted and was no longer breathing. He had died of old age!

"So? Does anyone have anything to say?"

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes as he spoke, and no one dared to say a word.

With a wealth of experience, they all knew the theory of surrendering and admitting defeat. They all knelt down and asked, "What orders you have for us, senior?"

"Senior?"

Fang Yuan laughed and thought in his heart, "What a sudden change in tone. Is this how my consciousness is?"

"Forget it!"

"He waved his hands and added, "From today onwards, whatever belongs to the mortal world will remain in the mortal world, and whatever belongs to the immortal world will remain in the immortal world, this is to.....separate heaven and earth!"

Everything Fang Yuan said was absolute and was to be abided.

Just as he had spoken finish, the heaven and earth shook, as though something was changing.

"The immortal world.....has been separated!"

Some of the grandmasters in the Tribulation Stage closed their eyes, while some of them took out their jades. They stared at it, speechless.

They had no intention of rebelling against Fang Yuan, who was able to change the world with just his words.

"From today onwards, I will be the greatest leader in the world of Qianyuan, the ruler of everyone. Those who follow me will prosper and those who go against me will perish!"

Fang Yuan's voice was apathetic. He looked at the immortal cultivators who were bowing down to him, but his heart did not waver a single bit.

As of this point, he was the ruler of the whole of Qianyuan.

So what if he was the ruler of this world? It was just a dream and he was not capable of controlling the dream world yet.

"One can only control a world when one has reached the peak of his abilities. I am still a distance away from that level!"

Similarly, an emperor in the real world seemed to have the

control of a country, but compare this to the entire world and it would become negligible!

At least, an emperor couldn't affect nature and will be clueless about whether there would be flood, drought or famine.

Fang Yuan's had more control than an emperor in the real world. He could be considered a deity, but he was still a distance away from having full control over this dream world.

"What happens after the separation of heaven and earth?"

He thought about it before disappeared in front of the group of grandmasters, leaving them in shock.

....

Time passed like flowing water.

Unknowingly, 100 years had passed.

After the separation of heaven and earth, the immortal world was sealed. Grandmasters in the Tribulation Stage who had managed to survive the 9 Tribulations would no longer be able to access the immortal world.

In the beginning, the entire cultivation world was in desolation. Many immortal cultivators were left in despair and walked the path of evil.

100 years later, as the evil immortal cultivators were being ganged up upon and killed off, a new generation of immortal cultivators was born. The world started to settle down.

Many grandmasters in the Tribulation Stage had tried to escape into the immortal world, but all had failed to do so. After losing faith, they decided to spend their lives discovering the secrets of longevity.

An increasing number of immortal cultivators from the new generation started to believe that there were no immortals in this world to begin with and that the most powerful beings were the

grandmasters in the Tribulation Stage.

Without external influences from the immortal world, the isolated cultivation world began to develop.

Although Fang Yuan had declared himself as the greatest leader of this world, he had kept a low profile ever since, and lived in seclusion. Hence, everything from destroying the demon to separating heaven and earth slowly became a myth.

"Hmm..... my current body in the dream world is very real. There are no differences, at least visually....."

Fang Yuan was living within the depths of the forested mountains. He examined his Dantian, full of satisfaction.

In this dream world, treasures and magical weapons were all but illusions. Martial art techniques were all just a kid's play.

The only useful thing in this world was the environment of the dream world, which he could use to perfect his martial arts.

At least, in this 100 years, Fang Yuan became extremely familiar with the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique. He had also read through the Spirit Returning Heart Manual and Xuan Yin Heart Technique Manual many times and was very familiar with the both of them, and might even be more well-versed than both Shi Yutong and the sect head of the Five Ghosts Sect now.

Once he was back in the real world, he could be comparable to a sect head.

"Even though I have spent so many years, it is still only 99% similar! The one last percentage of difference would make the outcome a lot different in the real world!"

Fang Yuan sighed silently.

With the combination of the two manuals he had read, he had a much clearer idea on how to progress on the pathway to Wu Zong with the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique. He had also made a few

successful 'breakthroughs' in this dream world.

However, to have a successful breakthrough in the real world, he would still have to test it out slowly in the real world. It would still be insufficient to just think about it in the dream world.

"This.....I would need a test subject....."

Fang Yuan gave a cold look and suddenly lifted his head. "Hmm? Is this....."

His current level in this world was at the peak. By simply staring into space, he arrived at an immortal cultivators' cave.

"Haha....I have succeeded! I have succeeded!"

An immortal cultivator in the Golden Pill Stage with messy-looking hair stared at a clumsy machine, which was spinning. His eyes then glittered."This spiritual turbine can work without the help of the Immortal Cultivators and function on crude oil. Even mortals can use it to create spiritual force.the vision of my ancestors is about to come true!"

The number of immortal cultivators in the world of Qianyuan was still much lesser than the number of mortal people.

In any world, there would always be only a small population of immortals. Otherwise there would be insufficient resources to go around.

However, with the presence of the spiritual turbine machine, the entire world had changed.

"Hmm? After the separation of heaven and earth, my fruit of labour is finally shown here. Is the world finally changing?"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

Even though he had become the most powerful immortal, he still couldn't fully control the world, and instead, had some daring thoughts of his own.

For instance, he could control and set this world onto a different

path.

After all, he was the ruler of this world! No one could say anything if he wanted to destroy the world!

He had free will to do whatever he wanted to and had executed the separation of heaven and earth. Finally, he saw the prelude to the era of post-immortal cultivators.

"Here we go....."

He sighed and slowly waved his hands. The heavens shook and a resolute change began to form.

.....

"Spiritual energy! The spiritual energy is decreasing!"

"In recent years, the number of immortal cultivators has been decreasing, and it is even harder to find children who are spiritually inclined among the population...."

"Sigh, I was from the south of the cultivation world. There are already 18 small sects which are unable to find any successors, driving them to extinction. I cannot find words to describe the situation....."

"I have heard that in the mortal world, the revolution of the spiritual turbine had the potential to completely replace the immortal cultivators, by being able to create spiritual force, and power talismans and magical weapons.....It is extremely simple to operate.....Is this the trend of the future?"

Even though immortal cultivators were known to be stubborn, some of them understood and realised the trend in the world and started to make discreet changes in order to continue thriving.

On the other hand, there were many high-levelled immortal cultivators who had no further progress in their cultivation and were at risk of losing their cultivation level. Some even went crazy looking for the demon who destroyed their world, which was Fang

Yuan.

From their instincts, they guessed that the decrease in the amount of spiritual energy was linked to the demon that had separated heaven and earth.

Of course, Fang Yuan was too lazy to deal with them.

...

History kept unfolding itself.

The drainage of spiritual energy started to slow down and maintained at a steady level after many high-levelled immortal cultivators died.

Not many young immortal cultivators in this world who could absorb the energy into their bodies. Those in the Golden Pill Stage and the Elemental Infant Stage were already considered the most powerful, and the Magic-melting and the Tribulation Stage had already become a myth.

The only good news was that with the decrease in the lifespan of the immortal cultivators, the destruction due to karma was getting smaller and everything settled down.

With this, the mortals were able to utilise the spiritual turbine machine to obtain energy comparable to that once harnessed by the immortal cultivators. Slowly, they used it as their bargaining chip to make requests.

The immortal cultivators, who were so used to being superior for a long time surely would not entertain to such requests. With this, an impending war broke out between the two sides.

The outcome was expected. The small population of the immortal cultivators was easily overwhelmed by the bigger population of mortals. Since then, the remaining immortal cultivators went into hiding in the woods, and the new era of mortals thus began.

Many new countries were born spreading across the 4 big continents. The improved mindsets and productivity levels further pushed the modern world to greater heights.

.....

The Year 389 of the New Calendar

In the capital of the Star Country, Heaven's Element.

The tar roads were designed in intersecting parallels. Beside the roads were a few big and tall cemented buildings. A giant screen was playing an advertisement of a middle-aged man making a speech. He was a candidate for the mayor election and he was gathering votes.

"Rumble!"

Many flying cars flew by, floating above the roads like blood flowing in arteries. They were emitting white smoke from their exhausts.

Beside the road, there was a cafe.

Fang Yuan wore spectacles and was scrolling through his smartphone.

"It has already been 300 hundred years.....I cannot believe that from my subtle hints, the whole world has undergone major technological advancements. This is vaguely similar to the weird dream I had previously....."

"Immortal cultivators are now a myth. Those who occasionally appeared would only be regarded as fortunate ones with special abilities, and would be subjects of interests to experiment on..."

"With a wave of my hand, this world is under my control!"

Fang Yuan laughed lightly and snapped his fingers.

"Kacha!"

At that moment, the whole world had come to a strange stop, as

if time had stopped running.

Chapter 108: Dream Master

"The essence of a dream master is to have full control over one's dream world, and subsequently rule it!"

"A dream which lasted a thousand years. I have finally attained such a level!"

Fang Yuan sighed.

Since he broke through Heaven Gate and increased his magical energy, he had a strong feeling that he could use this hidden ability in conjunction with his cultivation to become a dream master, and could, therefore, make tremendous progress.

Indeed, by taking advantage of the Spirit Returning Sect's pressure, he was desperate and made it!

"Shatter!"

He breathed out lightly, and the entire dream world shook.

"Kacha! Kacha!"

Cracks began to form all around, like a mirror cracking. Pieces shattered and fell towards the ground, as the cracks spread throughout the world in the speed of light.

"Rumble!"

In the blink of an eye, the entire dream world disintegrated into powder. Even the connecting Immortal World, Hell, the mighty Yama, and the daoist grandmasters were not spared. In shock, they disintegrated together with the world.

"I am the Light! I am the beginning! I am everything!"

Fang Yuan stood in the middle of emptiness, full of emotions.

The feeling of being a creator was one that was extremely overwhelming; it was the ultimate goal for most of the cultivators.

If a dream master remains trapped in a dream world and forgot

to return to the real world, his physical body in the real world would die, and this was the danger of being a dream master.

"My dream world, I am the creator!"

Just by thinking, an entirely new Qianyuan world began to form, and after a few upgrades, it was entirely the same as the previous world.

"There is an entire world in a flower, an entire Heaven in a blade of grass. Alas, a dream is everything!"

Fang Yuan shook his head, and his surroundings changed once again.

The Green Peak spiritual land appeared, followed by Qingye City, Qinghe County, Secluded Mountain Prefecture.

A world similar to reality appeared in front of him.

"Brother Fang, it was all Leiyue's fault!"

"Master! Ready to receive your orders!"

Surrounding him was a number of feminine ladies. There were Lin Leiyue, Zhou Wenxin and the other ladies who were once related to him before, albeit in some way or another. All of them looked pitiful.

"Good day to you, Master!"

Around 10 Wu Zongs and spiritual knights kneeled on the floor and became as lowly as dogs.

"Oh?"

Seeing this scene, Fang Yuan stroked his chin and found it interesting. "The details in my subconscious mind are appearing again?"

Even though he had full control of his dream world, it was still fluid.

A person's mind was complex enough, not to mention one's

subconscious mind.

Even the calm water in a well might become waves of tsunamis the next moment.

Therefore, even if one was enlightened, anything could still happen and one might lose his enlightenment.

"Once control is lost, the cultivation level of the dream master would drop... In the path of cultivation, there is another huge obstacle to overcome, and that is attaining 'Steadiness'. To be steady and be unwavering, to be wise and not use the wisdom, have values and be independent, and from there make the dream world a stable one, so that one would not accidentally stray from the path of dao..."

Fang Yuan shook his head, and a clear glow appeared from his body.

All the ladies and servants who were shone at by the clear glow disintegrated into dust, with Fang Yuan the only one standing.

"Phew..."

He opened his mouth and released a white flash like an arrow; it shot out a few feet.

"Eagle Claw!"

Fang Yuan's hands became claws, and move by move he practised.

Regardless of technique or strength, it was similar to that of the real world already.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Accompanying the movement of his joints, his breathing and the movement of his fingers, a distinct and loud chirping came from his body, as though his entire physical body was a large eagle.

"Good, now that the body in my dream world is 99.9% as that in the real world! The last 0.1% is the limits we have in the real world,

and unless I have a good grasp of the limits of the real world, my training would be useless..."

"This level of reality has already allowed me to try out and make some predictions to my breakthrough. The last three types of tryouts would have to be done in the real world already!"

Fang Yuan shook his head as he felt the fear of a dream master.

It was all about accumulating. In the beginning, a dream master would have insignificant combat powers but could use his abilities to assist himself and even deduce out techniques, which was the unique advantage of a dream master.

"Just plain old technique deduction, and is still much more efficient as compared to when I was a dream disciple... I have understood what it is to be a dream master!"

Fang Yuan remained quiet.

...

Reality.

Green Peak spiritual land, in the straw pavilion.

Fang Yuan opened his eyes, and his face shone. "Only I will know who will awaken first... A thousand years in the dream but not even 5 days in the real world..."

He chose to enter a closed-door cultivation here due to the level of safety and privacy available, but more importantly, he had someone to protect him!

He had earlier informed the Iron-tailed Black Eagle to knock at the door rapidly if he had been in confinement for too long, in case he got too engrossed in his dream and forgot about the time.

"Of course... the few hundred years in the Qianyuan world is nothing... It is just a thought that developed!"

Fang Yuan recalled the wonderful feeling that he once had, and thought hard about it.

Everyone would mature if they had to experience a thousand years. However, he spent a hundred of those years living in seclusion, and even detached himself from the world like a god, influencing the changes in the world. Therefore he only spent a fraction of all that time experiencing the world.

After all, anything could happen in the dream world.

"If I were to think about the time ratio, one day would be equivalent to a few years in the dream world. Although it might be a long time, it has yet to reach its limits..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and started to worry about his own evolution.

There was an entirely new force within his mind palace which replaced his previous miniature elemental force. It was like a dragon in hiding, albeit resting, and its aura was shocking.

Elemental force!

True elemental force!

"Have I gained complete control of my dream world, became the owner of the world and entered the world of a dream master?"

These changes were under Fang Yuan's predictions, and he took a glance at his stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 8.0

Spirit: 7.9

Magic: 8.5

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Martial Artist (12th Gate)], [Dream Master (1st Tier) (Fused Elemental Force)]

Technique: [Black Sand Palm (Grade 5)], [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 12) (Limit)]

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 4)]"

"My [Magic] points have increased by '3'? And I don't feel uncomfortable about it, it seems that my body has adapted to it already..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head, and looked at the description for 'Dream Master':

"Dream Master - You rule the dream world, you are a traveller between dream and reality, and a nightmare for all your enemies! You can control you dream world at will, and you are everything in your dream world!"

"The description is rather simple... In reality, the first part of my inheritance ends at becoming a dream master, and I have no idea what's coming up next..."

Fang Yuan touched his chin but did not feel disheartened.

After all, Master Wenxin's inheritance was there to stay. Since he became a dream master, he would be entitled to one part of it.

"Forget about the rest, the most important is learning the usage of dream elemental force... It would be useless if I could only use them in my dream world..."

"As well as martial arts... After becoming a dream master, my body feels increasingly real, and the three types of breakthrough seemed likely. With my magical energy, I can surely attain the Wu Zong level. Once I can prove that I am able to, then I will break through anytime!"

As he thought about it, he opened the door.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle saw him walked out, and chirped in joy.

"It's tough on you, good job!"

Fang Yuan stroked its head, and eagerly headed to the cave in the

middle of the mountains.

"Chirp!!!"

The shrivelled red-eyed white bird which was originally lying on the floor immediately lifted its head, and in anxiety, all its feathers stood on its ends.

It was the same evil human who was back, but it could feel a whole lot of difference in him. It was an astonishing transformation.

"Teacher!"

He felt different as he entered the cave with his inheritance.

The Questioning Heart Path did not have any visible effect on Fang Yuan.

The dream elemental force in his Mind Palace shook, and the hypnotizing effect that once made him sleepy dissipated. He arrived at the crystal door.

Previously, Fang Yuan tried all methods but could not get the door to open.

However, this time, as both hands came in contact with the door, Fang Yuan felt an entirely different feeling.

A gush of dream elemental force flowed from his forehead, through his hands and into the crystal door.

"Whoosh!"

After exerting his dream elemental force, the crystal door spun with a bright and colourful light, as though there was water flowing through it from inside. Suddenly, it was as though it melted, and the door slowly disappeared.

The huge obstacle for him previously just disappeared like that!

Behind the crystal door was another tunnel.

At the end of the tunnel, it was a purple crystal wall, and on top

of it sat a pearl the size of a dragon's eye.

"The second inheritance?!"

Fang Yuan was filled with emotions. He took out the piece of jade which he previously took, and placed it on the Purple Dragon Eye.

"Wung! Wung!"

A flash of light appeared and shot right into the emerald jade.

It happened in the blink of an eye, and shortly after, the Purple Dragon Eye lost all its brightness and became an ordinary looking marble; the original piece of emerald jade now had streaks of purple in it.

"This method of saving information is too eerie..."

Fang Yuan sighed and used his magical energy on the jade.

"Rumble!"

On the back side of the original inheritance, there was a new paragraph of text; it was the method of cultivation for a dream master.

After reading through it carefully, Fang Yuan became shocked.

"It is indeed the path of a dream master because after accumulation, my power will increase exponentially... But the only thing lacking is Master's message... It seems that everything is in the last piece of inheritance?"

Fang Yuan looked at the purple crystal gate and sighed a deep breath.

He knew that at his level, he was unable to open the door to get the last piece of inheritance.

"This piece of inheritance included the details of the cultivation process from the beginning of a dream master all the way to the Prominent Divine Stage, and is enough for my cultivation..."

Fang Yuan was extremely satisfied. Only his Master, whom he

lived with all his life would help him so much. If it was another person, they wouldn't teach him everything so smoothly and would make things difficult for him.

Chapter 109: Into the Dream World

"A dream master is the master of his own dreams! If the dream master wants to improve further, he will have to involve himself in other people's dreams.....Such an involvement is highly risky and it is easier to succeed by targeting a person who is less spiritually intelligent to train with..."

As he recalled the description in the inheritance, Fang Yuan became serious.

The dream masters who were able to access other people's dreams were known as 'dream-accessing masters'. The next step would allow the dream master to alter other people's dream, and would be known as 'dream-building masters'!

These two stages were the basic stages of a dream master.

After all these, it would be cultivating to attain Prominent Divine Stage: to understand the rules of reality and assimilate them into the dream, transforming things from the dream world into reality.

In conclusion, the more similar the dream world was to reality, the more similar the rate of time flow would be.

"Only when a dream world is similar to reality can a dream master start to actualise objects.....If I want to achieve the standard that my master has achieved, I will need a longer time to do that....."

Master Wenxin achieved not just the Illusionary Divine Stage, but could also build his own world and form spiritual land as well.

Fang Yuan could not imagine the complexities of such an achievement.

"The risks of accessing someone else's dream is way more dangerous than entering my own....If I was to get injured or killed, it would damage my magical energy and even my body in reality....."

Fang Yuan walked out, stared at the Red-eyed White King Bird, and was lost in his thoughts.

.....

"Chirp!"

One of the eggs broke. A chick with a few feathers and red coloured skin emerged.

It opened its little eyes and was feeling hungry.

With an immense amount of energy, it instinctively pecked and ate its own eggshell, while keeping a lookout at the other chicks.

Some of the young birds were much stronger. After coming out of their shells first and finish consuming their eggshells, they laid their eyes on the other chicks.

In the cruel fight for survival, being blood-related did little to deter them from fighting for their lives.

The chicks quickly fed on their own eggshells and shrieked loudly. They seemed unwilling to share their portions with the rest.

"Whoo! Whoo!"

Just as a few chicks were squeezing and on the brink of fighting, a big gust of wind blew and a giant bird suddenly appeared above the nest.

The giant bird's feathers were pure white and the bird's eyes were bloodshot. There were also a few golden feathers on the tip of its head, resembling a crown.

"Pa!"

After it landed on the nest, its metallic black sharp claws opened, dropping a piece of deer meat in front of the chicks.

'A deer? Why do I find it familiar?'

This thought went through the mind of a chick but disappeared

as it was distracted by the piece of meat.

It was so fragrant!

As they were hungry for food, the eyes of the young birds were all bloodshot.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The chick hobbled forward with the other birds and started to feed on the blood that was dripping from the meat.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Golden Crown King Bird let out a loud chirp. Using its claws and beak, it tore the meat into smaller strips, making it easier for the young birds to consume them.

Although they were beasts, they had already displayed signs of being special. Even though they were only at the stage of infancy, they had no problem digesting the raw meat.

"It's great to fill full....."

Another thought went through the mind of the chick.

After which, the energy it had was used to digest the meat, leaving the chick tired as it dozed off.....

.....

In a blink of an eye, many years had passed.

In the sky above a piece of spiritual land, the chicks had grown bigger and they were spreading their wings and flying across the big blue sky.

The Golden Crown King Bird would wait till all the chicks had fully matured before bringing them to the cliff. At the cliff, the Golden Crown King Bird would push them down one by one!

Those spiritual birds which had not mastered the ability to fly would fall to their deaths!

Under the fear and pressure of death, many spiritual birds would awaken and be able to flap their wings to bring themselves up.

Once they were able to fly, they were considered mature and they could start to hunt on their own.

The father of the young birds, which was the giant bird, would violently chase all the young birds out of the nest.

Every day, the young bird which had just reached the adult stage would have to endure through hunger and spend a lot of effort to hunt for its own food. It would also have to build its own nest to attract female birds in future.

Being pressured to survive and reproduce, the young bird quickly became the best hunter among their kind. It was able to hunt more preys than any other normal white birds and was larger in size, only inferior to the king bird.

However, there were many instances where the young white bird would still be confused.

Especially when it had gotten used to flying, but still didn't know what its hands were used for.

'A pair of hands.....this is a new term!'

Such thoughts which appeared many times in the young bird's mind had taught it how to think. This made it more spiritual than the other birds.

At this point in time, it had thoughts of challenging for the position of the king bird.

Only at the highest position would it be able to enjoy the greatest amount of power in the whole population. This was every white bird's dream!

The current king bird was the Golden Crown King Bird.

"Wait a minute....to overthrow the throne? Why must I do that?"

The young bird was a little confused as that thought came to its

mind.

"Who am I, where am I from and where am I going.....Am I really a bird now? No! No! I have a name.....my name is..."

In the sky, the young bird was in a trance and started to fall down quickly.

"I remember!"

"I remember!"

I am a white bird.....no! I have seen this type of bird somewhere!"

"I'm not a white bird. I'm Fang Yuan!!!"

"I am.....in the dream of the Red-eyed White King Bird!!!"

...

Many confused thoughts then went through its mind like a massive flood, and he remained helpless as he became overwhelmed.

"I have actually....became a bird?!"

While he was falling down from the sky, Fang Yuan didn't know to laugh or cry.

He no longer had the ability to make his bird body fly again.

"After all....this is not my dream.....and there would be a backlash as consequence....That was close!!!"

He still feared to know that he had become a bird. "Luckily, I am able to become self-aware, and this means that I have gotten the hang of it. I would be able to gain self-awareness quicker in future.....but I don't want to die in a bloodied mess now!"

Fang Yuan let out a loud cry and the bird let out a loud chirp. With much effort, he managed to spread his wings and fly again.

"That was close!"

He exhaled a long breath and said, "This is not my own dream. If

I were to get killed here, there would surely be a backlash!"

"Kacha!"

Immediately after, he heaved a sigh of relief.

A loud thunder rumbled from above and lightning struck down. The mid-air shattered and a fearful giant hand emerged from nowhere.

The giant hand's target was very clear. It went straight at the cliff and nobody could escape from it!

"Damn.....if I had my cultivation....."

Looking at the giant fingers, Fang Yuan felt like an ant. As his mind was whirling, his mind blacked out.

.....

Green peak spiritual land.

Back in the nest of the Red-eyed White King Bird.

Fang Yuan took a few steps back and opened his eyes. Two streams of blood flowed down from his nostrils.

"This is.....the backlash from the dream world!"

He wiped away the blood and looked at the confused Red-eyed White King Bird. He then gave a wry grin.

He tried out the dream-accessing method in an attempt to communicate with the Red-eyed White King Bird, but faced with an emphatic defeat!

Even though the bird was a semi-smart spiritual beast, the resistance in its dream world was powerful. Its consciousness had combined with Fang Yuan's, making Fang Yuan incarnate into a Red-eyed White Bird and making his mysterious dream a scary one.

Luckily, Fang Yuan was a dream master and was able to wake up after a few hints. Otherwise, he would have remained trapped in

that dream world.

Even so, after gaining self-awareness, the consciousness of the Red-eyed White King Bird immediately took countermeasures against him.

"The giant hand that was covering the whole sky..... That should be the scariest thing in that dream world. It appeared in that world to deal with me specifically....."

Fang Yuan touched his chin and was in deep thoughts.

Even though the things in that world was fake, it was still very real in the subconscious mind. Since the Red-eyed White King Bird feared the giant hand the most, it would naturally have an impression of it in its dream.

This was the strength of a dream master. In the dream world, adversaries would unknowingly reveal valuable information.

"However.....the risks are nonetheless high..."

Recalling the dangerous situation that he had just experienced in the dream world, Fang Yuan was still afraid.

"If not for the retaliation from the bird's subconscious mind, and that I became aware of the dream, this failure might severely harm my divine spirit. It would not be as simple as using up a large portion of my dream elemental force and experiencing a little bleeding..."

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Red-eyed White King Bird stared at Fang Yuan and was a little confused. It didn't know what Fang Yuan had just experienced.

Unknowingly, it had a strange feeling towards Fang Yuan. It was as though he was kind but evil at the same time, and had a phobia of him.

"However.....this is the correct method. In future, I will be much

more familiar with the method of execution. Compared to the complicated human beings and even more complex dream masters, this is considered an easy task already!"

Fang Yuan sat down and his dream elemental force was flowing slowly in his body. His throbbing headache slowly dissipated.

"Now, the subconscious mind of the bird has regarded me as an enemy. I should not prioritise it. Instead, I should start with the Iron-tailed Black Eagle's and the Flower Fox Ferret's dreams first before trying to access its dream again. Afterwards, it would be the most complicated dream world if the humans....."

After deciding, he walked out of the cave and took a deep breath of the air from the spiritual land. He felt more refreshed.

"I have made a breakthrough in the pathway to becoming a dream master. Next up, Wu Zong!"

"I have already tried the method and pathway of breaking through the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique in the dream world. There are three possible ways for me to do it, and I will need to try all of them in the real world....."

Even though there was only a slight difference between the dream world and the real world, there was still a possibility of him going crazy, as it involved his own elemental force.

Of course, Fang Yuan would not use his own body to try out and hence, he would have to find test subjects.

"Even though elemental force originates from heaven and earth, they might appear in different forms. Take for instance, dream elemental force is more illusionary, while the martial arts' elemental force in the Mind Palace originates from the Dantian... To qualify as a test subject, a person must be at least an Earth Gate martial artist and be able to harness miniature elemental force... I have one such person in my hands, no... I might have two!"

Fang Yuan looked at Qingye City and gave a scheming look.

Chapter 110: Kidnap

Qingye City.

The fortress was distinctly different. The wall was fully manned by several elite troops. An enormous crossbow was locked and loaded, pointing towards the main gate. The large arrowhead which had an iron hook attached to it looked like it could fall any moment.

During this period of war, not only was the head of this city replaced, even the guards were all replaced with troops from the Spirit Returning Sect.

Here, the army officers were all from the Spirit Returning Sect. Even though they were not as ostentatious and well-manned as the Secluded Mountain Prefecture to have level 4 martial artists as their lowest ranking soldiers, their lowest rankings soldiers were still around level 3, strong enough to easily overpower commoners without a martial arts background.

Ta ta!

Against the red evening sun, a group of riders emerged from the horizon. They were shouting and riding aggressively at great speed.

"Halt...Any unknown armed personnel who steps within the 30 metres radius of the wall will be killed without hesitation!"

Soldiers from the Spirit Returning Sect instantly grew alert and nervous as they readily aimed the crossbow in the direction of the riders.

"This is an Elder from the Spirit Returning Sect! We have a pass!"

From the centre of the riders, a flag was raised. This was characteristic of the Spirit Returning Sect. One of the riders raised an iron pass plate and sprinted to the bottom of the wall, just outside the 30m radius and shouted.

"Sou!"

A disciple from the Spirit Returning Sect executed Lightness Skill and leapt off the wall. He took a look at the pass and returned.

In no time, the gates opened, and Elder Han personally came out to invite the guests saying, "Hello Elder Bian! Sect Head informed me about this earlier, but I did not think that you would have arrived this soon!"

"The leaders of Maple City are spineless cowards! All we did was to exterminate a few families to scare them into submission...Hehe, I can be quite unpredictable sometimes!"

Elder Bian then chuckled flippantly, looking all the more intimidating to those around him.

At 30 years of age, with his hair at both sides greying, Elder Bian looked like an extremely experienced and seasoned martial artist. His martial arts skills were also highly advanced. They were comparable to those of Elder Han's.

"Come, please come inside Brother Bian!"

As a mark of respect, Elder Han pushed his right clenched fist into his left palm and smiled as he said, "Qingye City is different from the other places, the situation here....is slightly unique!"

Bian Xie was a renowned solo martial artist in Qinghe County. The legends said that he was a tomb raider from young. When he was still young he chanced upon a large tomb and found several extremely rare martial arts manuals buried with the body. From then, he already had the cultivation of the earthly element realm and the ambitious desire to break through Wu Zong and establish his own sect.

Up till now nobody knew what Shi Yutong promised him in exchange for his allegiance to the Spirit Returning Sect.

Elder Han guessed that Shi Yutong intended to make Bian Xie the successor and replacement for Lady Yan who had been kidnapped

for such a long time. As there was no news up till now, the chances of her returning were very low.

"Hehe...Of course I know, as for this well-known healer of the secluded valley..."

Bian Xie broke out in a carefree laughter and walked to the main residence of the city by the side of Elder Han.

Although the newly appointed head of the of the city had some credible qualities in management, he was not proficient in martial arts. Upon seeing the arrival of the influential and powerful elders from the sect, he threw a welcome banquet for them which he had prepared way in advance.

After the food was served, Elder Han started to discuss official business. He waved his hand, gesturing for the servants to leave Elder Bian and him alone.

"Elder Bian your arrival cannot be timelier!"

Elder Han took a mouthful of wine. As his face flushed slightly with redness, he reported, "Fang Yuan is a very powerful martial artist. He has probably reached the 4 Heavenly Realms. He also has a spiritual beast. In Qingye City, I am the only one confident of doing reconnaissance beyond the secluded valley without being detected...."

"It's so challenging?"

Bian Xie frowned and was filled with an unspeakable sense of jealousy.

He was not sure whether he was jealous of Fang Yuan being so gifted in being able to reach the 4 Heavenly Realms at such a young age, or was he jealous of Fang Yuan's great fortune at being able to have a spiritual beast as a companion, or maybe he was jealous of both aspects.

Elder Han raised his wine bowl and had an awkward smile on his face and remarked, "I am not that afraid of what he might do, but I

am indebted to him..."

"Elder Han do not worry, let me handle this!"

Bian Xie had heard about the news of Fang Yuan treating Elder Han. He was also aware of the unclear relationship between Fang Yuan and the pet disciple of the sect head.

Silently blaming Elder Han for being unwilling to take action and making him the aggressor, and also his bad luck for only joining the sect recently, he had no choice but to accomplish this mission regardless how nasty and unpleasant it was.

'Both sect heads are almost done with signing the alliance pact and will return very shortly. When she does, it's best for her to make the decision!'

Bian Xie was very troubled but he looked relaxed on the outside, enthusiastically drinking with his parter.

"Keke..."

Out of nowhere, a high pitch noise pierced through the air, causing Bian Xie and Elder Han to jump to alertness.

"Who is that who dares to make such a ruckus, are you looking for trouble?"

Elder Han turned towards the source of the noise and froze in shock.

A young man pushed opened the door and strode in carefreely. This was Fang Yuan.

"Oh? Looks like you are having a banquet? I hope you do not mind that I turned up without invitation?"

Fang Yuan entered without paying much attention to Bian Xie and spoke directly to Elder Han.

"Haha...Why would we?"

Elder Han laughed dryly. For some reason, his palms started

perspiring.

Qingye City was under the maximum security of the Spirit Returning Sect. Furthermore, this place was the core of the city and it was supposed to be the most highly guarded and secure place! How could Fang Yuan have evaded all those patrols and sentries and entered?

Of course, Fang Yuan's intention of visiting was more important now. He looked like he was not here on peaceful terms.

"This is..."

Bian Xie had never met Fang Yuan before. Judging from the way Fang Yuan behaved, he thought Fang Yuan was an important official in the city and Bian Xie looked towards Elder Han.

"Elder Han, let me introduce to you, the divine healer of the secluded valley, Fang Yuan..."

Elder Han laughed dryly as the muscles on his face twitched uncontrollably.

"So, it's you!?"

Bian Xie widened his eyes. After all, he was just discussing about how to take down Fang Yuan with Elder Han. Now that the person they were discussing about had appeared in front of him, the situation was extremely tense and awkward.

Most importantly, how much of their conversation did Fang Yuan hear?

"I remembered the dateline we gave you was in 5 days' time. Are you here because you have made a decision?"

Elder Han calmed himself down. Looking at Bian Xie by his side, he regained some of his confidence and spoke.

"Yes, I have decided!"

The smile on Fang Yuan's face widened as he said gleefully, "Furthermore, I am quite lucky today. I was originally planning to

catch a guinea pig, I was not expecting Heaven to be so generous to also send me a..."

"How dare you!"

Despite not knowing what Fang Yuan meant by referring to them as an experimental object, judging by his behaviour, it was obvious he was not there in peace and was ready to start fighting.

Elder Han instantly made the pre-emptive strike. With a thunderous roar he smashed the wine bowl in his hand in a thousand shards.

"Smash!"

As the bowl splintered into a thousand pieces as it hit the ground, the sharp noise reverberated and pierced through the silence.

However, there was no response from the surroundings. There was only dead silence.

Upon seeing this, the aggressive Elder Han exchanged a furtive glance with Bian Xie and realised their disadvantageous situation. Both began to break out in cold sweat.

"How? Very disappointed perhaps?"

Fang Yuan laughed, "Were you thinking of using the smashing of the bowl as a signal for 300 troops to appear and take me down? It's useless...I have already sealed off this area. If any noise from within this area can travel out by more than 30 metres, I would be impressed!"

"Lock down?"

Elder Han rose up slowly. He knew a fight with Fang Yuan was inevitable. He removed his outer robe and revealed his Golden Soft Armour and clenched his fists into a weird stance as he said, "Please enlighten me, divine healer!"

"Do not waste my time, I do not want to play this type of little games with you!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and replied, "If you surrender, I will still give you a painless death!"

"Such arrogance!"

Bian Xie shouted out and stepped into a weird footwork and arrived in front of Fang Yuan in a blink of an eye. He threw out a punch and with the thunderous roar of a ferocious tiger, it flew towards Fang Yuan's face.

The manual that Bian Xie took from the tomb had a total of three parts. One part had a total of 12 beastly fist techniques which were incredibly ferocious, another part was on the iron bone technique which solidified one's internal structures and the last part was on Lightness Skill, the Steps of No Return technique. With these techniques combined, they were no less inferior than the Spirit Returning Heart Manual and the Xuan Yin Heart Technique and were incredibly famous in Qinghe County.

Bian Xie attacked Fang Yuan with all his might, creating a remarkable sight.

"The Bestial Fist? I have heard of your reputation..."

Fang Yuan casually sent a right claw flying towards Bian Xie. Fang Yuan's execution looked casual, but was in fact immensely powerful and flawless.

"Slash!"

As Fang Yuan's claw contacted Bian Xie's fist, Bian Xie let out a gruesome scream and retreated extremely quickly. His right hand was locked in a weird angle behind his back.

Elder Han's eyelid jumped rapidly.

From his point of view, he could see blood flowing profusely on Bian Xie's entire arm. Bian Xie lost the fight in just one move!

"The Heavenly Gate!"

Fang Yuan stuttered.

"To be able to force Bian Xie to such a condition, not only was Fang Yuan a level 12 martial artist, he was definitely the top martial artist of that level. He was probably not far from the Wu Zong!"

Recounting his opponent's technique, Bian Xie's heart froze over.

The claw technique looked so simple, but it was so magically devastating and lethal. The executioner must have had practised it diligently for at least 30 years! Bian Xie refused to believe his opponent was so young.

However, the scar and excruciating pain from his battle wound confirmed this harsh reality, causing Bian Xie to convince himself he was in a dream.

"You were counting on this man?"

Elder Han rolled his eyes and replied, "So it seems you are very powerful, but what use does it have? Young man, I advise you to think about the consequences of your actions and not act so rashly."

"It seems I have to kill you to make you concede defeat!"

Fang Yuan laughed, "Just now I was rash as I was overly excited to finish him off, unless...you really thought that was everything I had?"

"What?"

Panic struck Elder Han. He was beginning to realise the perilous situation he was in.

"Leave quickly!"

Without further hesitation, he grabbed Bian Xie and sprinted in the opposite direction.

They went at an incredible speed and in a blink of an eye they were by the side of the wall. Elder Han was fully confident that nobody was that powerful to neutralise the guards outside without

making a noise. He just had to rally all the soldiers and he would be able to survive.

However, his eyes widened instantaneously.

"Whoo whoo!"

Within the hall, there was some sort of force in the atmosphere that coalesced on Fang Yuan.

A layer of thick fog appeared out of nowhere and blanketed the whole area. It even seemed to be alive as Elder Han felt as though there were numerous hands grabbing onto him.

"Sleep! Sleep!"

Elder Han suddenly felt an irresistible urge to fall asleep hit him, causing him to slow down.

It did not matter how many alarms bells rang off in Elder Han, his felt as though weights were attached to his eyelids.

"Bang!"

Just as he was intensively battling the sleep demon, he heard a dull thud next to him. It sounded as though a human body had hit the ground. At the same time, he felt a sharp pain in his neck and his vision blacked out as he fell into a coma.

Chapter 111: Shame

"Spiritual spells?"

Elder Han opened his eyes, but his surroundings were pitch black. He tried to recall what happened, and subconsciously mumbled to himself.

The suspicious fog and its similarity to spiritual techniques made him think of a spiritual knight.

"Very good! You've gained consciousness quicker, which means that you are stronger than Bian Xie!"

Fang Yuan stood at a side, satisfied.

"Why did I not guess..."

Elder Han laughed. "After knowing you for so long, I still had no idea that you know spiritual techniques..."

"It's only normal that you are unaware of it!"

The path of a dream master was inclined towards illusions, and therefore one was hard to detect.

Of course, Fang Yuan only used his elemental force for detection, or to make mental suggestions. Only when he had fully become a dream master and could harness dream elemental force did he learn a few spiritual techniques from Master Wenxin's inheritance.

Take for instance, the Bewildering Fog was one of the spiritual techniques which he had learnt.

Since it was summoned using dream elemental force, even martial artists in the 4 Heavenly Gates would succumb to it.

"You showed me such a big secret of yours... It seems that you have no intention of letting me go alive..."

Elder Han understood and accepted death, as he looked at his surroundings.

The place seemed like a cave. A torch burnt brilliantly which filled the cave with the smell of rosin. In the middle of the cave were three stone platforms. Other than himself and Bian Xie, there was another person!

Furthermore, this person was a familiar one.

"Elder Yan... Lady Yan!!!"

Elder Han's eyeball almost popped out. "You were the one that ambushed our sect!?"

Thinking about how his person destroyed his sect, and yet he foolishly sent himself to him, Elder Han began to break into cold sweat.

"That's me!"

Fang Yuan smiled. "Why is it fair for the Sect to plot against me, but unfair for me to strike first?"

"Evil thief!!!"

Elder Han's heart sank. He still felt for the Sect, and therefore was raging. However, he could not move a single bit.

The inner force which was initially strong was now sealed in the Dantian like a ferocious tiger in a locked cage, helpless.

"Stop struggling. I have studied you and Lady Yan the longest, and if I still don't know how to seal your martial arts, then I should just give up as a doctor!"

Fang Yuan calmly stated, and at the same time examined Bian Xie's joints.

As compared to Elder Yan and Elder Han, this [Martial Artist (11th Gate)] felt rather unfamiliar. He had to understand him a little more before taking any action.

In fact, no one was more suitable than Elder Yan and Elder Han in being test subjects.

After all, both of them were under Fang Yuan's control previously. Their circulatory system and martial arts were both deeply studied by Fang Yuan. As for Bian Xie, Fang Yuan still had to perform a few tests.

"What exactly do you want?"

Fang Yuan appeared too mysterious, and the only conscious Elder Han could not hold back any longer and asked.

"Don't worry, it's a good thing! I want to help you break through to Wu Zong!"

Fang Yuan answered honestly.

"What?"

At that moment, Elder Han thought that he had heard the biggest joke of his life, but slowly fear grew in him, and with anticipation, he asked. "What joke is this?"

"The 12 Gates of Martial Arts, in reality, is a method of self-training. It continuously developed one's potential, much like the process ancient spiritual knights used to go through... Once a person's magical energy is sufficient, with external stimulation, it is not hard to obtain hints of elemental force. This is especially true to Earth Gate martial artists like you, who have already sowed the seeds of elemental force..."

However, Fang Yuan deliberately missed out a point.

This forceful way of breaking through gates would take up too much essence from the body. Notwithstanding the shortening of one's lifespan, one's body might not be able to take it, as the increasing magical energy could not reconcile with the elemental force. Once the external stimulation is removed, the body would die immediately!

After all, martial arts was all about foundation, and such a hasty achievement would mean nothing.

But to Fang Yuan, this was all he needed.

With the experience to break through Wu Zong under immense pressure, he could reaffirm his predictions and use his dream elemental force to break through his own Wu Zong!

"You don't seem to believe me?"

Fang Yuan looked at Elder Han and grew a sinister smile on his face. "Doesn't matter, I will aid you in breaking through the Heaven Gate, and allow you to reach your peak first!"

"What?"

Elder Han was shocked, as he saw Fang Yuan pointing his finger towards his forehead.

"Chila!"

Suddenly, a large concentrated force the strength of an ocean broke through Elder Han's Mind Palace. It broke through the Heaven Gate with brute force, which left him in a state of shock, as he continued screaming.

The Heaven Gate needed a martial artist to break through it by himself willingly. With Fang Yuan's limited experience with using dream elemental force, his brute force approach would lead to dire consequences for Elder Han.

However, the effect was immediate.

After the commotion, Elder Han's eyeballs were bloodshot. He had an excruciating headache, as though someone took an axe and ploughed it through his head.

The restrictive Gate finally broke, and large amounts of magical energy rushed into his conscious mind, making him feel dizzy.

"Not... right..."

In his dizziness, a thought went through. "This force... elemental force!!! You are a spiritual knight!!!"

Elder Han could feel the astonishing force within him, and it might even be stronger than what Shi Yutong harnessed.

There was only one explanation for this, no matter how impossible it might be. This young man was not even a spiritual disciple, but a spiritual knight with full control of elemental force!

Thinking about how the Spirit Returning Sect was plotting against a spiritual knight, Elder Han felt disheartened, and his conscious became blurred.

"Ahh..... Breaking through the Heaven Gate with brute force would have side effects, and a shortened lifespan right?"

Fang Yuan shrugged his shoulders. "Rather than dying normally, why not do something crazy before dying, something like breaking through Wu Zong!"

This way of forcefully breaking through gates was possible to almost all Wu Zong spiritual knights, but the consequences would be terrible.

Fang Yuan had already practised it for 10 years in his dream, and in theory, it was perfect. He had ultimate control over his dream elemental force, but after doing it, his test subject would not have long to live.

However, he was satisfied with just having this test subject to confirm his prediction.

"Elder Han, hold on tight. Even if you will die, you should die as a Wu Zong and die glamorously!"

He became as serious as he ever would and struck a palm on Elder Han's dantian.

At the same time, he stuffed large quantities of spiritual medicine and the likes of the bamboo fruit into his mouth.

The continuous stream of dream elemental force slowly seeped into Elder Han's dantian, and towards his miniature elemental

force, as it slowly initiated the process of breaking through Wu Zong!

"The proper way to attain Wu Zong is to do it without haste, step by step. However, it would still be possible if someone used their elemental force to stimulate and break it through brute force... For others, they would explode while doing it, but for me, having harnessed dream elemental energy, I can still control it even by using brute force!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

In front of him, Elder Han's appearance became increasingly scary.

He looked ferocious, and veins were popping up everywhere. Blood flowed all around like earthworms digging through the ground, and his entire body seemed inflated like a balloon.

"Con...tract!"

Fang Yuan did not care and commanded the miniature elemental force to continuously compress itself, in an attempt to transform it into elemental force.

"Ping!"

After a long while, a soft sound travelled from the cave, followed by Fang Yuan's sigh. "I've failed... It seems that the first prediction is impossible, but that's ok, let's continue..."

...

The disappearance of two Elders in the prefecture led the entire Qingye City into chaos.

The new Qingye City Master became anxious, but could only comfort himself that the two Elders were martial artists of the 4 Heavenly Gates, and if they join forces within the prefecture, they would still be able to guard against Wu Zongs, and therefore were likely to be on a secret mission that no one else knew about.

However, five days had passed, and once Shi Yutong returned, he knew that all hope was lost.

"Elder Han and Elder Bian are missing?"

Shi Yutong wore a scarf over her face and appeared wealthy. By her side was Lin Leiyue, who was staring at the new City Master.

"I am useless and deserve to die!"

Even though this City Master was a Spirit Returning Sect disciple, he was still a lowly subject in front of Shi Yutong.

"This enemy is powerful to be able to abduct two Elders without a sound. Even if you have prepared for him, it would still be futile! Return!"

Shi Yutong calmly said a few words, which made Qingye City Master sigh and dismissed him.

"Master..."

When the others had left, Lin Leiyue appeared confused. "There is suddenly an appearance of a highly skilled person in Qingye City, so what should we do now?"

"It is not likely that even a Wu Zong could take down both of them... It might be a spiritual knight!"

Shi Yutong appeared serious. "I will personally take charge of this area and deliver a letter to the alliance leader for him to send help!"

A spiritual disciple would be comparable to a Wu Zong, but still highly depended on the nature of his spiritual technique. However, they would still lose to a Wu Zong based on their actual strength and skill.

Recalling the previous fight for the treasure map, both the spiritual disciples were just assisting the Wu Zongs in the combat.

If a spiritual disciple go one on one with a Wu Zong, with an incomplete elemental force, how would they match Wu Zong?

However, comparing a spiritual knight and a Wu Zong in the same realm, Wu Zong would lose.

By predicting the enemy's ability, Shi Yutong thought about the possibility of the mysterious spiritual knight and became on guard.

"How's it going on in the secluded valley?"

Lin Leiyue finally revealed her own intentions. "The deadline is over, but he has not given me a reply..."

"Secluded valley..."

Shi Yutong looked beautiful, but now had a cold look in her eyes. "Could it be that the disappearance of the two Elders is related to the secluded valley? Otherwise, why would they only disappear now?"

"Furthermore... I am also suspecting that the previous ambush on our sect is also related to the secluded valley! Even though we have no proof, but there is just too much coincidence, and hard for anyone not to suspect!"

"What?"

Lin Leiyue took a few steps back and tried to imagine Fang Yuan.

Realising that she might be lied to all this while and being manipulated by Fang Yuan, she became frustrated.

Chapter 112: Wu Zong

"Ow!!!"

Back in the Green Peak.

A long wail was heard from Fang Yuan's straw cottage. The wail was so loud that it travelled up into the clouds in the sky.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle which was flying past was frightened a little by the loud wail and it almost knocked onto the cliff.

"Haha....the pathway to Wu Zong is complete!!"

The wooden door opened and revealed Fang Yuan. He walked out and his essence, spirit and magic were very different now.

"I have spent numerous years spent on the theory of the dream world and this has become the foundation. It will be combined with the experiments conducted in the real word to form the threshold for the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique to make a breakthrough for Wu Zong!"

He looked at his Dantian.

The originally sky-blue miniature elemental force had slowly settled down into a liquid similar to mercury. It appeared tumultuous and dynamic, like a sleeping dragon. Its power was unthinkable.

"This is the Wu Zong's elemental force!!"

Fang Yuan let out a long breath and look at his stats window.

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 10

Spirit: 10

Magic: 8.5

Profession: Dream Master (Dream-accessing)

Cultivation: [Dream Master (1st Tier) (Fused Elemental Force)],
Wu Zong

Technique: [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 13) (???)],
Ecstasy Spell, Shadowstep

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 4)]"

"Dream Master - You are the creator of dream worlds, and a traveller between dream and reality, and a nightmare for all your enemies! You can control you dream world at will, and you are everything in your dream world!"

"[Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 13) (???)] - You have achieved the impossible by fusing the Black Sand Palm, the Spirit Returning Heart Manual and Xuan Yin Heart Technique together to raise the peak level of the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique to the level of Wu Zong. Your martial arts' elemental force would be encapsulated with stronger poison, stronger aura and stronger Yin!"

"Bewildering spell - a spiritual technique of a dream master. Able to release a bewildering fog at will, disrupting an enemy's concentration. Currently able to have a considerable effect on a martial artist at the 4 Heavenly Gates."

"Shadowstep - a physical skill of a dream master. It is illusionary and untraceable."

"[Medicine (Level 3)] - You are an expert in medicine and others see you as a powerful doctor. You will be able to treat any strange and complicated diseases successfully! (Such ability is not limited to humans)"

[Botany (Level 4)] - Your hands are considered holy. With your personal cultivation of the spiritual plants, the chances of plants growing in a good condition are increased tremendously. You will have a small magical power of being awaken."

It seemed like the big changes to his stats was due to the previous two breakthroughs.

"My martial arts has improved to the realm of the elemental force!"

Fang Yuan sighed softly and saw that the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was right in front of him. It was looking down and it felt close to him.

Even since his previous failure, he didn't dare to take a peep at the Red-eyed White King Bird. He had shifted his target to the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and the Flower Fox Ferret who are closer to him.

As expected, after a few rounds of dreams access, he not only felt that he had grasped the essentials of becoming a dream-accessing master, he was much closer to the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"It has been 5 days already. Let's go!"

He went on the back of the eagle and make a soft noise.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle spread its wings and flew very quickly into the sky. It then disappeared into the thick fog.....

.....

The secluded valley was very quiet in the morning.

The thin fog started to fade under the bright sunlight and the mist on the leaves reflected the sunlight to form with a rainbow coloured light.

The Flower Fox Ferret was patrolling the farm in a relaxing mood. It was as if it was an old rich man who was looking at his own precious assets.

Little Pearl had prepared a roasted fish for the Flower Fox Ferret for breakfast. At a distance away, a few old farmers came and finished up the dried food supplies. They then continued their

farming.

"Where has Sir gone to? The time for him to consider is already up since it has been 5 days!"

Zhou Wenwu and a few others were in a different situation from the farmers. They were very uneasy now.

"The sect master from the Spirit Returning Sect has reached the Qingye City and she will be here today. How do we deal with her?"

Yu Xinlou's forehead was forming cold sweat as well.

"Sir is very mysterious. Maybe he is caught up in some emergency matters and that's why he is not here yet...."

Zhou Wenwu said with a wry grin. He took a glance at Huang Fu Renhe, who was beside Miss Lanruo and shook his head.

If the situation would reach a point that it couldn't be salvaged, these siblings would be considered lucky if they could still be out there wandering around afterwards.

"I hope Sir will be back soon, or else we don't know what can happen here....."

He was having complicated feelings and didn't seem like he was an outsider.

Zhang Sheng was very silent and was outside sweeping. He seemed to be using a little more force than usual, which made it seemed like he was not really at peace.

"The sect master of the Spirit Returning Sect has arrived. Where is Fang Yuan?"

Suddenly, a clear voice was heard from the valley outside and this shook Zhou Wenwu a little.

"The Spirit Returning Sect.....is here!"

Zhou Wenwu gave a wry grin and look left and right. He then realised he was the most senior here and had no choice but to take

the initiative. "Let's go and welcome them!"

Outside the valley, Lin Leiyue looked at the entrance of the valley and was doubtful. "Since master, you are feeling suspicious about him, why do you need us here?"

"I will need you to find out his bottom line! I don't know whether the secluded valley is involved with the matter and we will need to investigate. It will not be good if we alert him at the initial stage!"

Shi Yutong replied while sitting by a soft bridge and she was looking at her fingernails.

"Yes, Master!"

Lin Leiyue felt a little strange but she followed her orders anyway.

Not long after, a few silhouettes appeared in the secluded valley.

"Greetings, Sect Master. We are honoured to have you here but Fang Yuan is caught up with matters and is not in the valley currently....."

Yu Xinlou was a hired master of the business council and therefore had the ability to welcome the guests.

"Zhou Wenwu!!"

Lin Leiyue frowned and saw a person who was hiding. She then said, "You are from my sect but why have you left your position and chose to come here? You better come out right now!"

She was already very unhappy with Zhou Wenwu for helping others secretly from the start and had decided to question him now.

"I.....this....."

Zhou Wenwu had difficulty answering her.

Technically speaking, even though Fang Yuan was incredible, he was slightly inferior to the Spirit Returning Sect.

However, when he recalled how Fang Yuan had helped him in many ways, that didn't matter to him.

"Hey brat, your name is Wenwu, right?"

Shi Yutong looked at Zhou Wenwu and had a little banter with him. "If I didn't remember wrongly, I gave you your position in the sect as I pitied you when Deacon Zhou was dead. You were then able to continue your father's legacy and you are not grateful for it? Hmm?!"

"Bang!!"

How scary was the Spirit Returning Sect?

She squinted her eyes. A huge pressure was felt everywhere, and Zhou Wenwu, who was in front, was shivering in fear. He could feel his inner force coming to a halt, as his knees were about to hit the ground uncontrollably.

Shi Yutong seemed to have displayed her might on purpose. Such great pressure not only overwhelmed Zhou Wenwu, it began to spread further. Yu Xinlou, Huang Fu Renhe and a few of the others were overwhelmed by it.

Just when Fang Yuan's men were overwhelmed and about to be defeated totally by Shi Yutong, a loud chirp came from the sky above.

"Chirp!"

With a strong gust of wind, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle landed in the secluded valley and was looking very proud.

"Your remarks are overboard, Sect Master Shi!"

Fang Yuan got down from the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and his voice could be heard very clearly in the area.

"Sir!"

Seeing Fang Yuan's arrival, the people in the secluded valley then recovered from their shock.

"Spiritual bird!"

Lin Leiyue was surprised when she saw the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

She could feel a great pressure from the eagle and it was comparable to a 4 Heavenly Gates martial artist. With its fast flying speed, even a Wu Zong couldn't catch up with it.

After all, a martial artist cannot fly!

She took a deep breath and knew that Fang Yuan had relied on it.

'Luckily my master is here. The presence of this spiritual bird will not affect the overall situation!'

Lin Leiyue secretly bit her teeth and was surprised to see that her master was also surprised.

"You are Fang Yuan?!"

Shi Yutong got up slowly and gave a serious look.

"Yes, I am.....What advice do you have for me, Sect Master Shi?"

Fang Yuan's elemental force in his Dantian was flowing and surging in his body. He was feeling very excited.

After the breakthrough, he had wanted to duel with another one who was of a similar level as him. Shi Yutong was definitely the most suitable candidate for that.

"You are so young, yet you have already reached the realm of the elemental force. I feel ashamed of myself!"

Shi Yutong sighed while she said. Her words felt like tornadoes as they spread across the whole area.

"What? Elemental Force? Wu Zong?!"

Lin Leiyue retreated a few steps and saw her master had said that with a serious face. She then realised that she had not heard wrongly and her mind was blank all of a sudden.

She didn't expect that Fang Yuan had managed to reach such a

level!

What did Wu Zong mean?

It meant that in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, one could open his or her own sect and own a county. The person would then be the leader of a powerful sect!

This was a dream that many martial artists had wished for but it was very to achieve it.

Even though Lin Leiyue was skilful enough and Shi Yutong had mentioned that there was hope for her to achieve Wu Zong, her probability of having a successful breakthrough was just slightly higher than the rest. On the other hand, Fang Yuan had actually made a breakthrough with solid proof and the difference between the two of them was very big.

"What? Sir, you have broken through Wu Zong?"

"That's great!"

Compared to Lin Leiyue's uneasiness, Zhou Wenwu, Huang Fu Renhe and the rest were very happy. They knew what Wu Zong was and they knew that they would likely be able to pass through the current situation safely. From today onwards, the secluded valley would be a stable and powerful region in Qinghe County.

"Keke!"

Fang Yuan seemed to be eager to have a duel with Shi Yutong. Shi Yutong then laughed and asked, "From your breath, I can see that you have only just make the breakthrough. Why? You can't wait to have a duel with me now?"

"If you can give a few bits of advice or so, I will be very grateful!"

Fang Yuan replied.

"Very well!"

Shi Yutong slowly asked, "Right here?"

"Right here it is!"

Fang Yuan had concealed some of his magical energy and Shi Yutong didn't manage to see his bottom line. She only thought that Fang Yuan was just a person who had just achieved Wu Zong and gave him a serious look when she asked about it.

"Whooosh!"

Lin Leiyue and the rest of the Spirit Returning Sect disciples retreated to a distance away and were stretching their necks to watch the duel. Both parties were feeling hopeful of this duel.

It was rare to see a duel between two Wu Zongs!

Chapter 113: The Challenge

A gentle wind blew at the entrance of the secluded valley, stirring up the sand on the ground.

The entire place was silent; a pin drop could be heard.

"Brother Yu, Brother Huang Fu..."

Zhou Wenwu's palms started to sweat as he focused on Fang Yuan and Shi Yutong. "Even though Master is Wu Zong, he had only just attained it, whereas the Sect Master of Spirit Returning Sect is an experienced Wu Zong..."

"Which one of us can actually guess what Master is thinking?"

Yu Xinlou was equally worried but appeared calm. "Maybe Master just wants to show off his Wu Zong capabilities to scare them off. After all... Master is only 20, right? Even if he loses this match who would dare to belittle him?"

Huang Fu Renhe nodded his head in agreement.

Even the weakest Wu Zong would be far stronger than a [Martial Artist (12th Gate)] at his peak.

Taking Fang Yuan's age into consideration, people would think that he was a demon with extreme gifts! His future cannot be fathomed!

Fang Yuan did not know what his followers were thinking.

But if he knew that they had decided in their minds that he was not Shi Yutong's match, he would be speechless.

"I cultivate as both a martial artist and a spiritual knight. Even if I concealed my cultivation as a dream master, my magic is still much higher than that of a normal Wu Zong. This is where my advantage lies. Therefore, I could take on the experienced Wu Zongs without any worry. By taking on Shi Yutong today, I can further set a name for the secluded valley!"

His thoughts ran wild in his mind as he took a quick glance at Shi Yutong.

"Master Fang, I am a lady, so I shall have the first move!"

Shi Yutong felt that he was distracted at the moment and therefore struck first!

Her movements were swift. With continuous footsteps, she appeared in front of Fang Yuan like a ghost. Her delicate hands suddenly transformed into palms and struck down on Fang Yuan.

At where she originally was, there was still a shadow, and her words seemed to come from there as well.

"What a good timing!"

Fang Yuan laughed, raised both of his hands and without retreating or counter-attacking, he countered with brute force!

Seeing this, Shi Yutong's beautiful eyes became suspicious, as she exerted her elemental force. Her hands seemed as though they could melt jade; the green veins were distinct and visible.

"Spirit Returning Strike! White Lotus Palm?"

Lin Leiyue shrieked; she knew that her master had exerted all her force in one move, and even used her secret technique!

"Ping!"

A large sound was heard followed by a wave of vibration travelling in all directions. The people of the secluded valley and Spirit Returning Sect all took a few steps back, and there was rumbling in their ears.

In the battlefield, the two silhouettes came into contact and immediately flew apart. Both of them gained their footing shortly.

Fang Yuan appeared emotionless and looked at his own arms.

"Pa!"

His clothing was suddenly torn apart and flew into the air like

butterflies, revealing his muscular build and smooth skin.

As Shi Yutong witnessed this scene she held her hands behind her back, as she did not gain any advantage from this opening move. Her eyes were full of suspicion. "Using a rough technique to break through to Wu Zong? What technique is this? 13 Golden Bells Concealment Technique? Or the Golden Jade Bone Formula? No... It doesn't seem like any of it!"

Those who used rough techniques to break through Wu Zong were crazy about martial arts and would use brute force in combat with little to no weaknesses. This gave Shi Yutong a headache.

"Whoosh! Whip!

At the same time, Fang Yuan's body produced popping sounds, all the way from his spine every piece of bone. He stretched all five fingers out and swiped, bringing with it a strong gust of wind. "One more time!"

"Chirp!"

With the end of his sentence, he flew forward and the friction with the air made a high-pitched chirping sound. He stretched his hand above Shi Yutong's head, and the force which popped within his body a few moments ago hardened his body and travelled to his arms and fingers, all the way to his fingertips. His fingernails were sharp as a knife and his fingers went for her head.

His hand had yet to land, but the wind from the fingertips could already stun her scalp.

Shi Yutong retained her composure and with a face of compassion, clasp her hands together in front of her chest. "Compassionate Seal!"

A holy light appeared on her face as her elemental energy formed a ring of protection around her; it was as though the compassionate Buddha had arrived at the mortal world.

"Break... it!"

Fang Yuan disregarded the protection and with his rough technique, struck down hard with his right hand, like a hammer.

"Crush!"

The exertion of energies was a different scene in the audience's eyes.

It was as though a ruthless large eagle was shrieking, with its sharp talons striking towards a Buddha in white robes!

After a short moment, Shi Yutong screamed and dodged away from where she stood; what was left there was Fang Yuan, who slowly stood up.

"Master... is actually at the disadvantage!"

Seeing their silhouettes come together once again, and looking Shi Yutong's messy robes, Lin Leiyue's eyeballs almost popped out.

Never would she have imagined that her god-like master would be pressured and put at a disadvantage by Fang Yuan!

"Good technique!"

Shi Yutong looked at Fang Yuan with suspicion in her eyes. "Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique?!"

After exchanging a few hands, she seemed to have understood Fang Yuan's technique but still could not believe her eyes.

When did this ordinary 4 Heavenly Gate martial arts technique gain the ability to break its limits?

"Indeed... What does Sect Master think about it?"

Fang Yuan shrugged his neck, and his laughter struck fear.

Although he had only just attained Wu Zong, Shi Yutong was fighting with him in terms of rough techniques, and by pitting her weakness against his strength, she would obviously lose.

"Great! Indeed, a young warrior! I guess I'll have to deal with you like a real opponent!"

Shi Yutong blushed, and once again placed her palms together.

"Rumble!"

A white glow appeared from her body, and in mid-air, pieces of white flower petals were floating around. These petals came together to form white lotus flowers which gradually landed on the ground.

"Releasing elemental force! Forming a figure outside the body!!!"

Yu Xinlou exclaimed. "This is a battle between pure elemental forces. Master had just attained Wu Zong, and have yet to explore the uses of magical energy, I'm afraid..."

"Oh? Finally the real deal?"

The white lotus flowers seemed like an illusion, but in fact, every petal was extremely heavy and had the ability to explode.

Fang Yuan witnessed this scene and smiled. "Great, I've just completed my warm-up!"

Elemental force was the force that cultivators harness!

Although he had only just attained Wu Zong, he had previously attained the title of a dream master, and therefore the fight between magical energies was at the same level.

"The releasing of elemental force and forming a figure is merely the control of one's own elemental force... Those with a higher magical energy would therefore have an advantage!"

As he thought to himself, Fang Yuan carefully transferred his elemental force from his Dantian to his arms and released it.

Even though he used his magical energy to assist him in harnessing his elemental energy, the assistance that he had gotten was not to be belittled. As of now, he had fine and delicate control of his elemental force, which was better than that of many Wu Zongs!

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Accompanying the high-pitched chirping, Fang Yuan's claw struck out. A large black eagle claw appeared in mid-air, which reflected light like the finest metal, and every slight detail of the claw was distinctly visible, as the claw struck out.

"Pa! Pa!"

Many white lotus flowers were swiped at by the eagle claw and disappeared in mid-air; what was left was white dots that fell to the ground.

"How is this possible?"

Shi Yutong took a few steps back, and a chill went down her spine.

The releasing of elemental force and the forming of figures was something only experienced Wu Zongs could do. It was obvious that Fang Yuan only just attained Wu Zong, so how did he have this ability?

Needless to say, the lifelike Eagle Claw figure was much stronger than her figure!

This shouldn't be happening!

"This level of gift... Demonic!"

"Rumble!"

The large eagle claw struck downwards without mercy. Shi Yutong dodged it like how a willow would bend in the wind as she twisted her waist. Her breathing was rapid, and she took a glance at Lin Leiyue who was watching the fight and sighed.

This disciple of hers was already rather gifted, but compared to Fang Yuan, she was nothing.

In the beginning, she missed out on the opportunity and only appreciated the pearl, but gave the uncut jade a miss.

It was too late as everything had already developed to this stage, and there was no turning back.

"Haha! Again!"

Of course, Fang Yuan did not know what Shi Yutong was thinking.

Conversely, he was increasingly excited as the battle ensued.

Shi Yutong was the best teacher he could have, as she selflessly gave out all her Wu Zong combat experience during this fight. Secretly, he wished for her to be able to hold on a little longer, just for the fight to last a little longer.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Both his claws struck forward with his elemental force in mid-air. One claw came from the left, and the other from the right, trapping Shi Yutong in the middle!

"Bloom and grow!"

Shi Yutong's palms pushed outwards as she exerted her elemental force, destroying the two Eagle Claw figures, as she shook hard.

"Whoosh!"

Within the fog, Fang Yuan appeared and another claw came from above!

The Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique breaking through to Wu Zong meant that his strength was not in releasing his elemental energy, but in using his heavy and brute physical techniques.

"Pa!"

A piece of elemental force white flower petal landed on Fang Yuan and exploded, but he was unharmed. Fang Yuan maintained his swiftness and came in front of Shi Yutong, striking his right claw out.

Shi Yutong suddenly felt a cold sense of danger.

It was a feeling that she had not felt in a long while.

Obviously, his young Wu Zong had the ability to kill her! And he

had the intention to!

"Ping!"

She raised her hands with much effort to block the claw and subsequently retreated. Her expression changed as she spat out a mouthful of blood!

"Master!"

Witnessing this scene, Lin Leiyue rushed forward, but it was all too late.

Fang Yuan seemed to be too engrossed in the fight and there was no way for him to calm down. He chased her and struck his claws continuously to force Shi Yutong to a certain spot.

As the most critical moment, the sound of a flute was heard which, as though an armoured cavalry came to the rescue.

A graceful figure appeared from the woods blowing her flute.

"Indeed there is someone else!"

Fang Yuan laughed and took a step back.

"Cough cough... Master Fang is highly skilled, and I cannot match it!"

Only at this point did Shi Yutong had the breathing space to declare defeat, and her face turned pale, which showed that she had suffered from severe injuries.

"You are... Ling Yin?"

Before the fight even began, Fang Yuan already realised someone spying on them, and purposely fought hard to force the spy out. Only then did he realise that it was the mysterious spiritual disciple which he met at Secluded Mountain Court.

"My greetings to Master Fang!"

Ling Yin chuckled. "The moment we met, I knew that you were not an ordinary person, and who would've known that you are

now at the level of a Wu Zong..."

Chapter 114: Split Up

"Have you and Fang Yuan met before?"

Shi Yutong was suspicious and continued. "You are the disciple of the great alchemy master Lu Renjia, and since he loves to nurture the younger generation, he would be overjoyed to know about the talented Fang Yuan!"

Hearing this polite yet threatening words, Fang Yuan remained calm, squinted his eyes and revealed a cold look. "You only appeared at the end of the fight. I see that you have the intention to help this Sect Master secretly?"

He had already witnessed the two sisters fighting side by side against the Five Ghost Sect Sect Master; he knew that he would not be so lucky and that Shi Yutong would definitely bring assistance with her.

Shi Yutong could easily overpower any normal Wu Zong without any help.

Even if a spiritual knight had ambushed them, the two ladies could still defend themselves and escape.

After all, being the favourite disciple of an alchemy master, and in troubled times like this, how could she not bring a few treasures for self-defence?

Fang Yuan still did not forget how Ling Yin fought the Blood Killer with her emerald flashes.

'The likes of an alchemy master can harness spiritual fire for alchemy and is therefore sought after by many cultivators. Therefore, it is only normal that they are wealthy... If I strike now, I am only 30% confident to take down both of them, so it would only be wiser to take them down one by one!'

"How would little sister dare?"

Even if she was the disciple of an alchemy master, she still lowered her status while talking to another Wu Zong.

After all, although spiritual disciples harness a miniature version of elemental force, and were able to cast a few elementary spiritual techniques, they would still be no match when against true elemental force.

Ling Yin felt her hair standing on its ends as Fang Yuan stared at her. She felt insecure, and a little embarrassed.

"If that is so, let's discuss the important stuff!"

Fang Yuan turned his head and came straight to the point while looking at Shi Yutong. "What is the purpose of Sect Master coming here personally?"

"This..."

Shi Yutong froze.

She intended to defeat the doctor at the secluded valley first to let him know her prowess before extorting some spiritual rice.

However, the other party was now a Wu Zong!

Not just a Wu Zong, but a Wu Zong that was more powerful than herself!

How could she state her conditions now?

"Hehe... I have received news that Leiyue's fiance is here and therefore came here specially to visit. The criteria set previously were but a joke, right?"

Ling Yin took a few steps forward and tugged at Shi Yutong's sleeve, as she hinted her with her expression.

"That's right! That's why I have come here!"

A Wu Zong is worth establishing a good relationship with, and especially when the Wu Zong is so strong!

If she could convince him to join their alliance, losing a female

disciple wouldn't matter!

After weighing things out, Shi Yutong came to a conclusion and looked at Lin Leiyue.

'Master...'

Once Lin Leiyue understood her master's intentions, she blushed and felt agonised.

Her proud personality did not resonate with the fact that she was treated like a gift or a compensation. What made things worse was that Fang Yuan once rejected her!

'Indeed an experienced person. A Sect Master's words are indeed heavy...'

Fang Yuan noticed Lin Leiyue's minute actions.

He recalled how Shi Yutong convinced Yu Qiuleng to force himself to reject the marriage previously, which was a 180-degrees change to how she was treating him now, after witnessing how highly-skilled he was.

"Forget about it. Why would I still mull over the marriage incident?"

Fang Yuan waved his hand. "Please take your leave, I won't send you!"

Hearing his heartless words, Shi Yutong looked at Ling Yin and forced a smile.

They knew that it did not matter to Fang Yuan whether they were on the same side or now. Furthermore, they could feel that he was irritated by his words.

Lin Leiyue shivered.

After she finally convinced herself to sacrifice her future for the Sect, Fang Yuan could reject her effortlessly.

This scene became a joke compared to the fight at the beginning!

Her face became flushed as she felt that everyone was mocking her. She could not control herself and her tears flowed out, as she turned around and ran away.

"Keke... My disciple is so mischievous, don't take it to heart!"

Shi Yutong took a step back. "Since Master Fang has no intention, then Sister Ling Yin and myself shall not disturb you any further, we shall take our leave!"

As a Sect Master, her words had weight.

As they took their leave, there was no chaos. With a Wu Zong and a spiritual disciple leading the way, the rest dispersed orderly.

...

In the forest, Shi Yutong instructed the Sect disciples to find Lin Leiyue, and hinted to Ling Yin to take another path.

Not long after, they arrived at a small cliff and looked far out. Everywhere was forest-green.

"Good, we are more than 10 miles away now, we can speak here!"

As the gentle breeze blew, Shi Yutong said, "Even though Fang Yuan is more skilled than me, I can still eavesdrop on him!"

"Since you say so, I am assured! However, just in case..."

Ling Yin smirked and took out a spiritual talisman, which burst into flames without any wind. From the crimson flame, a spiritual print emerged and glowed. It imprinted itself on her forehead and glittered.

"Mmm... There is no second Wu Zong nearby!"

She closed her eyes for a moment and concluded.

"Harnessing the ability of the spiritual talisman, you are able to increase your magical energy and increase your detection ability to be on par with that of spiritual knights. I am relieved!"

Shi Yutong nodded her head in satisfaction and admired how

Ling Yin could sacrifice a spiritual talisman without hesitation just for her.

She did not have an alchemy master as her backer and therefore could not be as extravagant as her.

"Sister, you do not want to admit that you have lost, is that right?"

Ling Yin smiled cheekily. "You have painstakingly planned this, but who would've known that there would be such a change of events! If this news spreads, the families and organisations that we have convinced might reconsider their loyalty!"

"We cannot help it. After all, who would've known that he could suddenly become a Wu Zong?"

Shi Yutong was bitter. She shook her head and became resolute. "After seeing him, I am sure that Elder Han's disappearance is related to the secluded valley! Furthermore, it might even be related to other stronger powers..."

"Is this why you did not allow me to fight just now?"

Ling Yin toyed with the jade bangle on her wrist. "If we teamed up against him, we might be able to defeat him, like how we did against the Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master the previous time, hehe..."

She turned serious. "Before the war, such a change in Qinghe County would be against my master. Do you have the confidence to be able to convince him to be on our side?"

"As of now, I'm afraid not!"

Shi Yutong bit her lip. "You are also aware of the marriage rejection incident. Seeing how he responded just now, you could tell that it did not matter to him anymore. If we had to blame someone, it would be that disciple of mine who could not manage the situation properly..."

"Then this is troubling. If he chose to strike us at a critical

moment, as a Wu Zong, he would bring us a lot of trouble!"

Ling Yin looked down in despair.

"Sister, what do you mean?"

Shi Yutong guessed. "Strike first? That's right! Making the first move is a good idea!"

"Let's not delay it any further. I'll find my master and get him to send some highly skilled martial artists to help us out!"

Ling Yin replied.

These two ladies were decisive. In a few words, they had concluded that there was no way to convince Fang Yuan to help them, and immediately thought of killing him as the solution!

Unless they had enough resources, otherwise they had to get rid of those getting in the way before the war begins.

"That's a good idea!"

Shi Yutong wanted to say something but was interrupted by a red firework in the sky.

"That is the Sect's signal. It seems that they have found Leiyue, oh..."

Shi Yutong nodded her head. "She is not mature enough yet. Maybe I shouldn't have used the spiritual rice and spiritual pill to aid her in breaking through the Pain Gate then..."

"If you did not aid her in becoming an inner force martial artist, how can she defend herself in times of war and conflict? This only showed your care and love for her..."

Ling Yin smiled. "I was joking just now. You will surely reconcile with your disciple after a good talk!"

"Thank you, sister, for understanding, I shall make a move first!"

Hearing how understanding Ling Yin was, Shi Yutong stood up and used her Lightness Skill. After a few jumps, she disappeared

into the forest.

"Eh... I am so jealous of Leiyue for having such a good master!"

Ling Yin knew that the master and disciple needed their private space to talk and so did not follow her. She looked in the direction where Shi Yutong went, sighed and at the same time suddenly felt worried.

The cricket sounds around the forest made the forest feel even more eerily silent.

A breeze blew across her face, and she shivered.

She felt the feeling of danger, and her mind was empty, as though she had done something wrong.

"Danger? That's impossible, I've checked that the surroundings were clear just now! Even if I've separated from sister, as long as I am not being followed, what should I be worried about?"

Even such, Ling Yin's palm subconsciously rubbed her jade bangle as she scanned the surroundings on high alert.

"You are quite alert!"

A clear voice travelled from afar. It was a young voice and brought with it a sense of familiarity.

"It's you!"

As the fog thinned out, Ling Yin saw a figure walking out of the fog and clenched her teeth. "Fang Yuan!!! Impossible! Even if you are Wu Zong, you should not be able to hide from Shi Yutong's and I!"

"Then why is it that you still cannot detect me? Do you want to make a guess?"

Fang Yuan moved his feet and his entire body floated forward. It split into 10 bodies, which confused anyone who would see him.

And his speed was completely different from when he was

fighting Shi Yutong previously.

At the same time, a huge spiritual pressure was exerted.

"Spiritual knight?"

Ling Yin's face changed.

Chapter 115: Hunting Down

Ling Yin retreated quickly and the weapons on her body were reflecting light.

She didn't expect Fang Yuan to be able to conceal himself that much. His spiritual techniques and martial arts not only had been improved tremendously, he had managed to break through the threshold of the elemental force!

Fang Yuan was not only a Wu Zong but also a spiritual knight. Obviously, he had managed to pass both her and Shi Yutong's checks successfully and even heard the secret conversation between the both of them. He had also decided to attack when both of them were separated.

"Sir, please listen to my explanation first!"

In quick succession, Ling Yin activated many spiritual talismans and equipment to defend herself. With a change in the pitch of her voice, the green bangle emitted a bright emerald glow, which then transformed into a small dagger, ready to fly out of her hands.

Unfortunately, she could only achieve this step.

"Ecstasy spell!"

Fang Yuan executed the spell and the surrounding fog started to get denser like a tsunami. Ling Yin was overwhelmed by the fog.

In the white fog, there was a flash of green light and a female voice.

"Pa!"

The emerald green coloured bracelet landed on the ground and rolled to Fang Yuan's feet.

"Disperse!"

Fang Yuan snapped his fingers and the fog from the spell started to fade away. It then revealed Ling Yin who was unconscious.

Even though she had so many layers of defence, she was not immune to the spell executed by a dream master.

"I am a dream master and it will be strange if I can't even handle a spiritual disciple!"

Fang Yuan picked the bracelet up and shook his head.

He would probably be worried if he was dealing with both Ling Yin and Shi Yutong at the same time. However, he would just be worried that he cannot use his full power in front the both of them.

Since now both of them were separated, it was much easier to ambush one of them.

This spiritual disciple who had managed to suppress the Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master and the Blood Killer was easily defeated and there was barely any resistance.

"My dream master's spiritual techniques tackle one's mind. What's the use of having so many layers of defence?"

Fang Yuan squatted down.

With a flash of light, Ling Yin's defences started to fade and her defences were formed into a few charms and weapons.

"Hehe.....her teacher is indeed an alchemy master. Look at all these charms and weapons....."

Seeing the many spiritual charms and weapons that were on her body, Fang Yuan shamelessly took everything from her without even leaving a bottle of medicine for her.

After he was done, Fang Yuan then sent out a signal.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Along with the high pitched noise from an eagle and a strong gust of wind, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle landed.

"Bring me to Shi Yutong!"

Fang Yuan got onto the back of the eagle with a serious look.

He was not prepared to let her go and since he had already attacked Ling Yin, he would want to defeat the other one as well!

"However....my actions have offended Lu Renjia. If I don't want to be out there and running for my life in future, I will have to be on Liu Yan's side."

Fang Yuan murmured and was wavered.

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle charged into the sky and disappeared into the layers of cloud.

.....

"Master...."

Beside a spiritual spring.

Lin Leiyue tucked her arms and sat on a green rock. She looked at the flowing spring water and there were a few black fishes swimming in the water. She then recalled the days when she was younger.

Back when Master Wenxin was still alive, her father had much admiration for Master Wenxin and they visited him often.

It was that spring when she first met Fang Yuan and both Lin Leiyue and Fang Yuan were still very young.

Master Wenxin liked Lin Leiyue a lot and proposed a marriage between Lin Leiyue and Fang Yuan. Her father gladly accepted it.

However, no one expected Master Wenxin to pass away so soon as he was highly skilled in medicine. Also, Lin Leiyue was valued by Master Wenxin but now everything had changed since Master Wenxin's passing.

She didn't expect that Fang Yuan, who was previously alone and had no one to depend on, was able to improve tremendously in terms of his cultivation and skills in medicine on his own. His business in the secluded valley was thriving and he had even made

a breakthrough for Wu Zong already!

Even though she was talented and spiritual, Master Shi Yutong had only mentioned that there was a chance, and not a guarantee, for her to achieve Wu Zong!

One had the potential while the other had the ability to achieve Wu Zong. The difference between the both of them was very big!

Even her master was generous in her words and had sacrificed Lin Leiyue's looks to pull Fang Yuan to their side.

'This world.....only respects the powerful ones. If one wants to control his or her destiny, he or she will need to have the ability to do so!'

As she was looking at the shadows formed in the water, Lin Leiyue clenched her fists.

Suddenly, a reflection of another person appeared on the surface of the water.

"Leiyue, are you blaming me?"

Shi Yutong was beside Lin Leiyue and she asked with a gentle voice.

"I dare not to blame you!"

Lin Leiyue quickly got up.

"You didn't dare, but that didn't mean that you did not....."

Shi Yutong shook her head and said, "However, this is human nature. I'm not blaming you!"

"Master.....for the greater good of the sect, I'm willing to sacrifice!"

Lin Leiyue bit her teeth and continued, "No matter how Fang Yuan humiliates me, I will seek for his understanding....."

"It's good that you are willing to sacrifice for the sect!"

Shi Yutong's eyes glittered. "However, you don't have to worry

this matter anymore!"

"What?"

Lin Leiyue was very surprised. "He is a Wu Zong!"

"Under normal circumstances, I can understand why you will choose to let this matter go, but now the situation is different. We have many allies and Master Lu, and won't a Wu Zong be just a small issue to us?"

Shi Yutong gave a cold look and said, "Fang Yuan is too powerful and he hates me. He has become the most unstabilised factor and I will have to remove him before the big battle!"

"This..."

Lin Leiyue was startled and speechless. However, she was feeling relieved at the same time.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Suddenly, a small green bird appeared and landed on the shoulder of the Shi Yutong. The bird was chirping anxiously.

"Bad news. Ling Yin is in trouble!"

Shi Yutong's expression changed and Lin Leiyue was surprised by her it as it was her first time seeing that expression from her master.

"Before I got separated from Ling Yin, I had the green bird to watch over Ling Yin just in case anything happened to her. Since the bird is so anxious now, something bad must have happened to her.....In this county, the only person who can do this is Fang Yuan!"

Shi Yutong brought Lin Leiyue along and they went into the forest quickly with their lightness skill. "Our secret plans must have been discovered and we are bound to get killed by Fang Yuan! There is no room for Ling Yin to escape!"

Lin Leiyue was sluggish and knew that the secret plans made by

Master and Ling Yin must have been discovered by Fang Yuan and Ling Yin was probably killed.

Isn't this an irony when Shi Yutong had asked her not to worry about the matter just now?

"Chirp! Chirp!"

However, it was not a good time to care about these conflicting matters now.

With the loud chirp from an eagle, a giant eagle appeared from the layers of cloud and it spread its wings. A giant black shadow was formed.

"How is this possible?"

Shi Yutong's expression changed completely.

She had purposely chosen a small pathway in the forest which was concealed by the tall trees. However, that giant eagle was still able to locate her wherever she went.

"Hoo! Hoo!"

There was a strong gust of wind and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle took a shot. Its sharp claws had broken an old tree into half.

"This is not good!"

Shi Yutong pushed Lin Leiyue away and said, "Fang Yuan must have done something on us and that's why he is able to locate us. Looks like we will have to split. Leave now!"

Shi Yutong let go of her hand and caused Lin Leiyue to be pushed at a distance away in another direction.

"Master!"

Lin Leiyue was teary and had no choice but to leave the place.

Behind her, she heard a loud voice and a loud eagle's chirp.

The eagle was not giving Shi Yutong any mercy and it went straight towards her.

"Fang Yuan, it's really you!"

Shi Yutong's voice then came. Another clear voice was heard. "Ling Yin has been defeated. Sect Master, you have injuries and you are definitely no match for me. What are you waiting for?"

"I would rather die in the name of justice than to surrender!"

Shi Yutong sighed and continued, "I didn't handle this matter properly and hence I landed myself in this trouble. I admitted that I had lost but I would want to fight to the death for honour!"

"Very well!"

Fang Yuan's voice was projected and an explosion then came.

Lin Leiyue heard what happened and her heart sank. She knew that Fang Yuan had caught up with her master and there was no chance for her to escape already.

Even though she was still confident in her master, her master was previously defeated by Fang Yuan. Hence, how lucky would she be this time?

"Fang Yuan!"

She bit her teeth and escaped with tears in her eyes. She swore in her heart, "I...I will have my revenge one day!"

...

"Very good! Your courage is commendable!"

Fang Yuan praised Shi Yutong who was standing right in front of him.

Fang Yuan didn't care about Lin Leiyue who had started to run away.

Both of them were now not of similar grade and level.

Also, Shi Yutong had brought quite a few disciples from the Spirit Returning Sect and since they were all separated, it would be very troublesome to kill every one of them.

The current issue he was facing now was pressing and he would think about the rest later after he had defeated Shi Yutong.

"Eagle Claw Palm!"

"Compassionate Seal!"

"Bang!"

Releasing their elemental force, the figures clashed, and in the process broke many trees. The entire place was in a mess.

Shi Yutong was of no match for Fang Yuan as she was already injured. Currently, her messy hair and her bloody mouth made her look like she was in a poor state.

"Don't you think of escaping from me. Wherever you go, I will still be able to find you!"

Fang Yuan said coldly and kept discouraging Shi Yutong with his words.

"I know..."

Shi Yutong took a glance at the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and gave a wicked smile. "I have a question that needs to be answered. If I don't get the answer, I will not die in peace!"

"Are you wondering how I am able to track you down?"

Fang Yuan shook his head and said, "You will know the answer very soon!"

"What?"

Shi Yutong felt a great sense of danger coming towards her suddenly. She didn't think much and quickly transformed into 9 shadows. The 9 shadows then attacked from all directions.

"Ecstasy spell!"

Fang Yuan lifted his fingers lightly and the surrounding fog started to spread. All her shadows were engulfed in the fog.

"Is this...."

Shi Yutong was confused at first by the fog, but the elemental force inside her Dantian shook her and she was able to recover from the spell. She was very surprised and asked, "Is this.....a spiritual spell?"

"Peng!"

With her slight hesitance, she was on her way to her death since her enemy was a Wu Zong.

Fang Yuan suddenly appeared behind her and grabbed!

Chapter 116: Knocking on the Door

Upon removing her face mask, Fang Yuan was shocked at the amazingly gorgeous looks of Shi Yutong.

Beneath her perfectly curved eyebrows were a pair of upward sloping eyes. She had a small mouth and flawless porcelain skin. Even though she was no longer youthful, age did not seem to have caught up with her. She looked like she was at most 30 years old, maybe with an aura of a much mature woman.

Even though she was in her coma, her beautiful eye brows and the slightly pained expression on her perfect was still sufficient to arouse the deepest desires of the men around her.

Even though Ling Yin was also considered to be a pretty woman, in the presence of Shi Yutong she paled in comparison.

"Sir...sir..."

Of course, Fang Yuan could casually enjoy this pleasant sight while the others beside him were in utter shock.

After stuttering about for quite some time, Zhou Wenwu finally got his words out of his mouth and said, "Sir...you...you said that you went out on a hunting trip earlier..."

'How did you end up bringing back these two ladies with you from your hunting trip?'

This was the most pressing question Zhou Wenwu had on his mind that he wanted to ask, but he could not muster the courage to do it.

"Oh...While I was on my trip I coincidentally heard these two ladies discussing about how to sabotage me, so I took action and brought them here!"

Fang Yuan dug his ear as he blatantly spoke the truth.

'It seems like you already had an ulterior motive before you

embarked on this hunting trip and you just ended up stalking them.'

Yu Xinlou and a few others rolled their eyes at Fang Yuan's admission. Huang Fu Renhe coughed and stepped forward and asked, "Now that if have both of the sect heads of the Spirit Returning Sect, what is there to be afraid of them?"

"Correct!"

Zhou Wenwu's eyes brightened instantly and said, "Sir is also a Wu Zong too!"

The immense prestige of the Spirit Returning Sect caused Fang Yuan's judgement to be clouded a little earlier. Now that his mind has cleared, he felt a little indignant as he thought, "Anyone with the ability could live within Qinghe County! What makes the Spirit Returning Sect the natural owners of this area!"

"Keke..."

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes at this far-fetched thought.

Although admitted, now that the Secluded Mountain Valley had the supreme tutelage of Fang Yuan, a few martial artists who have broken through the 4 Heavenly Gates and the spiritual beasts, there was no difference between the Secluded Mountain Valley and the Spirit Returning Sect or Five Ghosts Sect. However, they were a world apart in terms of rootedness.

Based on Fang Yuan's calculations, it would be almost impossible for him to control Qingye City based on the little resources he had, unless all the disciples in the Spirit Returning Sect swore their allegiance to him.

If he attempted to control the county, it would definitely lead to chaos and unrest. The costs outweighed the benefits.

"Sorry for spouting rubbish sir!"

Zhou Wenwu blushed with embarrassment.

As a former disciple of the Spirit Returning Sect, Zhou Wenwu was in an awkward situation. He was very eager to demonstrate his loyalty to his new master. The best way to do was of course to denigrate his original sect as much as possible, to show that he had severed all ties with them.

"However, you made one excellent point. Maybe we will not take Qinghe County, but I definitely want to take down Qingye City."

Fang Yuan nodded his head and said, "Zhou Wenwu, what is the likelihood of you controlling a city if you return now?"

"Erm..."

Under Fang Yuan's strong influence, Zhou Wenwu responded, "If you rise to Wu Zong and the news of the capture of Shi Yutong spreads out, the likelihood is about 50 to 60 percent!"

"It seems like you are still clear headed, and your judgement has not been clouded!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and said, "I'll place Flower Fox Ferret and Zhang Shengpai under your charge. Go back and rally everyone else immediately to detain or banish the disciples of the Spirit Returning Sect!"

"Yes sir!"

After some internal calculation, Zhou Wenwu concluded that after the removal of the Guo family, Qingye City was now up for contention amongst his own Zhou family, the Zhang family as well as Minister Lin's Lin family. The Zhang family was greatly influenced by the secluded valley and there was no problem convincing them. His only main obstacles were the Lin family and the Spirit Returning Sect. Minister Lin was a sly old fox, if he had known that Shi Yutong was defeated and captured, he might also switch allegiance or even maintain his neutrality for the sake of his family's survival.

As of now, the only person left to deal with was the new head of

the city and a thousand disciples of the Spirit Returning Sect.

Zhou Wenwu witnessed the mighty powers of Flower Fox Ferret himself before. It was comparable to a martial artist of the 4 Heavenly Gates level. With the addition of the extremely powerful and formidable servant cleaner, there was a high chance the mission would succeed. Zhou Wenwu beamed with confidence at this thought.

If he could take advantage of this situation and strengthen the position of his family to become the top-ranking family in the city, the days ahead looked extremely hopeful.

"But sir...why aren't you leading this mission yourself?"

After Fang Yuan answered, a few doubts emerged in Zhou Wenwu's mind.

He believed that if Fang Yuan led the mission himself, with his reputation as a Wu Zong, the disciples of the Spirit Returning Sect might even give up without a fight and all the other families would swear allegiance to him automatically.

"I...naturally will have other more important things to tend to!"

Fang Yuan lifted up the two comatose women and mounted Iron-tailed Black Eagle and ordered, "Attend to your tasks. I hope that I can have Qingye City in my control by the time I return!"

"Kaw kaw!"

Iron-tailed Black Eagle flapped its wings and took off.

With the extra weight of two extra human beings, it was a slightly burdensome load for it. Nonetheless it still flew off and disappeared amongst the clouds.

...

"Even though I have captured these two women, I have brought more trouble for myself. Without considering Shi Yutong, Ling Yin is the disciple of Lu Renjia. If he finds out he will definitely not let

this matter rest and I will have very little options available when he does that!"

Fang Yuan ordered Iron-tailed Black Eagle to fetch him to his secret hiding spots. He first dropped Shi Yutong off at the place he detained Lady Yan and then brought Ling Yin to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City.

"Since I cannot trust Lu Renjia, I can only ally myself with the head of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. I think this stepping stone and application seems rather substantial!"

Fang Yuan took a glance at the comatose Ling Yin cradled in his arms indifference in his eyes.

Having gone through the training in his imaginary world, Fang Yuan was exposed to incredibly beautiful women. Ling Yin's aesthetic beauty could not sway him.

This sort of temporary beauty could not last in the long-term.

What attracted Fang Yuan's attention was the spiritual objects and other ornaments on Ling Yin.

"As long as one was a spiritual knight, one would be able to use spiritual prints to create a spiritual amulet. But most of these ornaments on her seem to be extremely rare charms..."

High up in mid-air, a translucent force floated up approximately 500 metres in front of Fang Yuan, blocking off the strong winds from reaching him, allowing him to sit steadily on the platform as he toyed with the green bangle in his hands.

"This spiritual item...seems very interesting..."

Fang Yuan's sight dug deep into the amulet. In no time, he dug out the most valuable item within the bangle.

The bangle was neither gold nor jade and spiritual light gleamed from it. Several spiritual prints lined the bangle, forming a chain.

"What a great spiritual item!"

Fang Yuan then attempted to inject some Dream Elemental Force into it and removed Ling Yin's original presence within it. Fang Yuan then decisively left his own mark inside it.

"Snap!"

In a burst of light, the green bangle turned into a dagger in his hands. On it, cold light enveloped the spiritual light earlier. Just by this sight one could tell it was not a normal item.

There were complicated writings on the body of the dagger, seemingly forming the olden words for "Green Snake".

"The Ancient Green Serpent Dagger?"

Fang Yuan let go of his hand and the magical energy dispersed. The green dagger melted into a ray of green light flowing about on his body as though it was a part of him.

"Outstanding!"

After this experiment, Fang Yuan was extremely delighted.

"Even though I am not an expert in using instruments or weapons, the power in this spiritual object is quite remarkable. It might even be good enough to be beneficial for a spiritual knight."

It was obvious that this was a gift from Lu Renjia to Ling Yin.

In reality, if Fang Yuan was a bit more aware, he would have known that Lu Renjia personally used this spiritual item before and was probably very well known for doing so amongst the higher echelons of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture.

By bestowing this give to Ling Yin, he sought to protect her through its reputation. Even if she ran into a spiritual knight or a Wu Zong, not many would risk offending him by attacking Ling Yin.

But going by Fang Yuan's unconventional way of thinking, Lu Renjia's plan not only failed, it also gave Fang Yuan an extra valuable spiritual item.

"You will be mine from now on!"

Even though Fang Yuan did not know much, he could judge from the response of Blood Killer and deduce that this dagger was extremely well-known. It could possible even be Lu Renjia's precious item.

However, he had already done the worst thing possible to offend Lu Renjia, it did not matter to Fang Yuan that he took away his precious item. At that point, he contentedly and happily kept the item and continued looking at his other loot.

"Erm, apart from a few spiritual amulets with unknown uses, the rest are just common pills. I'll let Huang Fu Renhe identify them when I get back..."

After a while, Fang Yuan rubbed his chin as though he was thinking of something.

He was slightly disappointed that he did not find any special alchemy or secret spiritual knight manuals on Ling Yin, but what he got was also irreplaceable.

"In fact, as a spiritual disciple, she is extremely valuable to me. Just by considering that fact that if I improve by one more level within the dream master realm and become a dream building master, I can extract everything that Lu Renjia taught her as long as it was not protected by magical will...."

A dream master had to be make extensive preparations to succeed. Even though Fang Yuan only mastered the dream elemental force, he had also received assistance on several other aspects which were sufficient for him to see many unexpected results!

...

Even though the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City was very far away from Qinghe County, it was only so if one were to travel by land.

At the blistering speed Iron-tailed Black Eagle flew at, in no time, Secluded Mountain Prefecture City appeared as a black giant in front of Fang Yuan.

In comparison to the grand and magnificent sight of earlier days, the city now looked devastated and run-down. What was left of the city was plastered full of burnt stains or blood stains. This was the obvious devastation of the ongoing war.

At that point, the head of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, Liu Yan attempted to encircle Lu Renjia but he underestimated his opponent. Furthermore, he was slow in his execution of his strategy and had to deal with the rebellion of three strong families as well as some of the higher-ranking officers in the army. This brought about massive casualties to both sides and the entire city was ruined. The civilians were in great suffering.

In the end, Lu Renjia retreated first but he annexed three counties and was still in a state of war with the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. Nonetheless, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was no longer the power it once was.

Chapter 117: The Meet

"Who is it?"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle landed and its giant body frightened the people who were living in the mansion of the prefecture master.

Fang Yuan clearly knew that many arrows were now aimed at him. Such threat caused the eagle to fidget a little. It could feel that there was a very high chance of it being seriously injured or getting killed!

'Correct.....if the Secluded Mountain Prefecture didn't have any air defences, wouldn't the spiritual beasts which could fly be ruling the airspace?'

He rode on the eagle and intruded the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City, and even landed right in front of the mansion of the Prefecture Master. This had caused lots of attention.

As the alert was sounded, many Secluded Mountain Prefecture soldiers came and surrounded Fang Yuan. The leader who was leading the group of soldiers was an 8-feet tall strong man. He was wearing a bull's horn helmet and he charged straight through a crowd violently and shouted, "How dare you intrude the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. Who are you? What's your name?"

The man with the bull's horn helmet was bold but cautious. He knew that such person who could ride a spiritual beast was definitely not a simple one. Also, Fang Yuan didn't land directly inside the mansion of the Prefecture Master, which showed that he was not trying to harm anyone. The man with the bull's horn helmet then ordered his men to stay put and be alert.

"Hehe.....I'm Fang Yuan from the mountains. I wish to see the Prefecture Master!"

Fang Yuan stood with both of his hands behind his back after he

had got down from the Iron-tailed Black Eagle. He seemed to be very calm and was able to smile even though there were many soldiers surrounding him.

"Wu Zong?!"

The leader focused on Fang Yuan.

This Wu Zong was young and a stranger to him. He was quite surprised and had to be cautious of Fang Yuan.

"You want to see the Prefecture Master?"

He stared at Fang Yuan and went through his mind quickly. He cannot recall anyone who was Wu Zong and was able to tame a spiritual beast. He then continued, "I will report your arrival to the city master, but it is up to the city master whether he wants to see you or not....."

"Yes, I know....."

Fang Yuan seemed to be quite confident that the city master would see him.

In fact, in times of war and when this place was heavily guarded, the Prefecture Master would be busy handling matters. However, with the power of Wu Zong, Liu Yan would definitely make time to see the Wu Zong even if there were no support forces backing the Wu Zong.

Indeed, not long after, a soldier came running towards Fang Yuan and said, "The city master would like to invite you to the guest hall!"

"Very good! But I will have to get my gift for him first!"

Fang Yuan went back to the eagle and carried Ling Yin down from the back of the eagle.

"What are you....."

The leader couldn't believe his eyes.

He wanted to comment on the gift as the city master was already old and was not into young girls anymore. Plus, Fang Yuan was a Wu Zong and even brought such a gift, which disgraced him as one.

When Fang Yuan tidied Ling Yin's long hair and revealed her face, the leader was even more shocked. "Ling Yin!!"

He knew her as the beloved disciple of Lu Renjia and had previously seen her at the birthday banquet. He also knew that Lu Renjia even sent two Wu Zongs to escort this lady.

However, she was now beaten till unconscious and given as a gift. He couldn't comprehend this big change.

"What do you think of this gift?"

Fang Yuan threw Ling Yin to the leader.

"Uh....."

The leader was feeling awkward and immediately ordered his men to bring Ling Yin to elsewhere, where his men could watch over her. He then gave a thumbs up to Fang Yuan and said, "Well brother.....what a good way!"

At that point, he was not feeling suspicious of Fang Yuan already.

Even though he could see that Fang Yuan was trying to make use of Ling Yin to gain the trust of the city master, the city master was not a simple person. He was the most powerful spiritual knight in the whole of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture and such assassination was just a joke to him.

However, if Fang Yuan was planning something else, wasn't he treating the staffs living in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture as fools?

Hence, the leader could confirm that Fang Yuan was sincere about joining the alliance with the city master. He then welcomed him and said, "Come.....I shall bring you to the guest hall

personally! And also your spiritual beast!"

The leader then ordered, "Men! Ask the chef to slaughter a few of the snow cows and bring the beef to the spiritual beast!"

"Thank you! However, my spiritual beast is a little different. It prefers to eat roasted meat!"

Fang Yuan smiled and continued, "And if there is hard liquor as well, it will be even better!"

"Haha.....you are indeed a special person. Even your spiritual beast is special. What a coincidence, the roaster meat here in this mansion is superb and I shall ask my men to bring a few bottles of wine!"

The leader's eyes glittered and were wide opened.

If Fang Yuan didn't have any matters on his hand to settle, the leader would probably be eating and drinking with Fang Yuan together to their hearts' content. Likely, they would swear to become brothers as well.

"Please lead the way!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle was having a feast outside while Fang Yuan followed the leader into the mansion of the Prefecture Master.

The mansion looked grand and many of the structures here were newly built. There were a few big pits which had not been covered up and they looked worse than the ones outside the city gate.

'Were these pits formed during the battle between the spiritual knight and Wu Zong?'

Fang Yuan thought.

From what he had seen from the outskirts of the city, the battle was so intense that half of the main hall was destroyed. One would not be surprised if the whole mansion here was destroyed totally.

The Prefecture Master was very capable as he was able to rebuild

this place to such a state.

After they went past a small garden, they reached the guest hall.

"Please have some tea first. The city master will be here soon!"

After they entered the guest hall, the leader invited Fang Yuan to have a seat and two beautiful servants came in and served him tea. They then left right away, which clearly showed that they didn't want to stay in the hall for long.

"The tea made here in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture is the best in the whole of Xia Country. You have to taste it!"

The leader lifted the teacup and took a sip of the tea delicately. He was enjoying that cup of tea.

"Oh?"

Fang Yuan then laughed and said, "Well, I will have to taste it for myself then!"

He could smell the fragrance of the tea as he lifted his teacup. The fragrance brought him a sense of tranquillity and peace.

In the translucent tea, the tea leaves slowly unfolded. This particular tea leaf was like a piece of white jade, and the veins on the leaves were distinct and connected to the stem of the leaf. As the leaves spread out, it was akin to a flower blooming slowly.

"Good tea!"

Fang Yuan gave a surprised look and said, "From the colour of tea, I can see that this tea is of high quality!"

Of course, he knew that the leader had not much knowledge in tea and since he had enjoyed the tea so much, it was likely a spiritual tea.

'This tea is inferior to my Questioning Heart Tea.'

Fang Yuan's heart wavered and took another sip.

A bland taste filled the mouth, bring with it a mild stimulation to

the taste buds. The stimulation slowly increased in intensity and was unlike a strong sensation that would slowly die down. This was an unforgettable taste and would leave a strong impression.

Of course, as the tea reached the stomach, Fang Yuan could feel the spiritual energy spreading inside his body and his Dantian was warmed by the tea. He felt that his elemental force had improved even though it was just a slight one.

"How is it?"

The leader stared at Fang Yuan and saw that he was also enjoying the tea as well. The leader then patted Fang Yuan's leg and said, "Good one, brother!"

"Hmm?"

Fang Yuan was confused by the leader's expression and actions.

"Brother Fang, this tea is actually a spiritual tea and is limited in stock. This tea is only served to important guests. Spiritual knights, Wu Zongs, or anyone else who have tasted this tea for their first time will have a very different expression on their faces, which show that they really enjoy the tea. This is the first time I have not seen an expression that has changed. Very good!"

"Hehe....."

Fang Yuan was speechless for a moment and felt that the leader seemed like a crazy person when he agreed with someone as his actions were overly expressed.

In fact, even though the tea served was good, it was not really the top-notch ones. The leader wanted Fang Yuan who was used to drinking Questioning Heart Tea to feel lost after drinking this tea? What a joke.

"Here comes the city master!"

Just when Fang Yuan thought that the leader had wanted to swear with him as brothers, the city master was finally here.

"I have seen you before, Prefecture Master!"

He exhaled a long breath and got up to greet the city master after he had managed to stop the conversation with the leader.

"Hehe....there is no need for such formality. Please rise!"

Liu Yan held Fang Yuan with both of his hands and was smiling widely.

As Fang Yuan got up, he was looking at the city master in detail.

From just a look, one would think that the city master was just a skinny old man with two thick eyebrows.

However, Fang Yuan was not only a Wu Zong, he was also a dream master and hence was able to detect much more.

There was always a fire-type energy surrounding Liu Yan at all times. By simply using one's magical energy to observe the area, one would realise that it was no longer a person sitting in the prefecture master's chair; it was a huge fireball!

This illusion meant that this person's spiritual knight cultivation had already reached the peak and was on the brink of a breakthrough, slowly approaching the next stage of cultivation.

"Your name is Fang Yuan?"

Seeing that Fang Yuan had joined the alliance out of his own will and even brought another powerful person as a gift, Liu Yan would definitely not put up his strong self in front of Fang Yuan. He was constantly giving a smile and was kind. He looked like one of the kind old neighbours in the city.

However, his eyes looked solemn. "If I'm not wrong, you are not only a Wu Zong but also somewhat a spiritual knight.....Also, you have already made a breakthrough to the heaven, haven't you?"

This was not much of a secret as Fang Yuan had already expected the city master to know this when he gave Ling Yin as a gift.

He had also reveal part of his magical energy on purpose and it

was normal that he had been seen through.

"You're correct!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head conservatively. However, even if Liu Yan was 10 times more observant, he would still not be able to detect Fang Yuan's true identity as a dream master.

After all, there were many branches of spiritual techniques, and dream elemental force was the most illusionary one. How would Liu Yan be able to differentiate it from the others?

"You are a talented one indeed. I admire you!"

Liu Yan's expression had gotten a little more serious.

"What.....Brother Fang, you are a spiritual knight? Oh my..."

The leader, who was beside them, was so surprised. "You really have my full respect!"

"You can leave first, Leader Niu!"

Liu Yan frowned and waved his hands.

"I will take my leave!"

Leader Niu dared not to be arrogant in front of the city master. He immediately took a bow and left, leaving just Fang Yuan and Liu Yan in the guest hall.

Chapter 118: Advice

Only Liu Yan and Fang Yuan were left in the guest hall after Leader Niu left.

Liu Yan seized Fang Yuan up and sighed, "My friend, you have reached such a high level at such a young age. On the other hand, I have achieved nothing at my age..."

"Prefecture Master, you have overestimated me!"

Fang Yuan replied humbly.

While Fang Yuan had previously heard about Liu Yan's character, he still felt the need to be wary of Liu Yan.

"This is not overestimating you!"

Liu Yan stroked his sparse goatee and said, "From what I know, there are only a few people who are able to reach the level of Wuzong or spiritual knight in Xia Country. You are the first person to simultaneously reach the two levels in Xia Country! I think even amongst the neighbouring countries, you are considered a genius that appeared once every 300 years!"

While many old masters were able to alter their appearance to look young, the life energy that they exuded was different. Not even Fang Yuan's real age could be hidden from Liu Yan's spiritual eye.

Fang Yuan did not expect that Liu Yan would hold him in such high esteem.

After a moment of silence, Liu Yan asked, "Who is your teacher?"

"I am from Qinghe County, and my teacher is Master Wenxin!"

Fang Yuan used his master's alias which was the name that his master used to avoid trouble.

Upon hearing that Fang Yuan was from Qinghe County, Liu Yan laughed. "Good! Good! Good! A youth from my Secluded Mountain

Prefecture!"

He pondered for a while before asking, "Where is your master?"

The master must be frightening if he was able to train his disciple to such a level.

"My master is long gone!"

This was no secret. Many in Qingye City knew and Fang Yuan did not make any attempt to hide the fact.

"I see! No wonder..."

Liu Yan nodded. He suddenly thought of something and after pondering it for a while, he made up his mind. "I want to talk to you about something but I wonder if you are willing to hear it out?"

"Please speak!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand.

"The cultivation of martial arts or the road to being a spiritual knight requires years of effort and hardship. There is a limit to the energy of a person no matter how talented he is. This is especially true where it becomes increasingly difficult to progress later on. My friend, it is advisable to only choose one path of cultivation if you do not want to end up like us. Only then will you be able to achieve success!"

Liu Yan advised.

"Thank you for your input sir!"

Fang Yuan felt like rolling his eyes as Liu Yan did not mention the conditions of joining the alliance and instead gave him a piece of advice regarding his cultivation.

Fang Yuan knew that Liu Yan meant well. However, Fang Yuan was very different from other geniuses and as such, the advice was not applicable to him.

"I would advise you to choose the path of the spiritual knight if you are to choose one path of cultivation!"

Liu Yan could see that Fang Yuan did not take his advice to heart and turned strict, "Furthermore, from my years of experience. I have a revelation that there is no path after Wuzong!"

"There is no path of cultivation after Wuzong?"

Fang Yuan quivered as he noticed this problem.

"That's correct!"

Liu Yan laughed bitterly, "Why did you think the 12 Golden Gates of Cultivation was set up?"

"It was to help those martial artists to develop a strong foundation, especially those who lacked the aptitude to reach a higher state of elemental force!"

Fang Yuan answered without a moment of hesitation.

He had the right to be confident for someone who had undergone the cultivation of martial arts.

Based on his predictions, the path of martial arts was conceived by a spiritual knight who wanted to benefit the masses. Therefore, the step by step process through the 12 Gates was created.

After all, the path of a spiritual knight started from a spiritual disciple followed by becoming a spiritual knight. This was a huge single step and was extremely difficult.

Martial arts divided this huge single step into 12 Gates. There was a process to be followed as a path to increase one's cultivation level. Finally, those cultivators with enough magical energy would successfully breakthrough if they have just enough potential to become a spiritual knight or alchemy master.

"That is correct!"

Liu Yan nodded his head, "However, martial arts' elemental force is primitive and low-levelled. How can it be compared to a spiritual

knight's elemental force?

Even the techniques of the Spirit Returning Sect and the Five Ghosts Sect could only reach the realm of Wuzong with no means to progress after..."

Liu Yan continued, "There are sayings that in the distant Da Qian Empire where martial arts is common and progression in martial arts is fast where the realm after Wuzong had been clearly divided, unlike here where people are still sentimental..."

"Therefore, comparatively, for us spiritual knights, as long as we cultivate naturally and slowly develop our elemental force, by accumulating our cultivation, we would be able to achieve a breakthrough. We have also inherited a few incomplete records of the way ahead, and are not completely clueless about the future for this path of cultivation!"

"This information should be given to you by your master. However, as he had passed away, I could only take matters into my own hands and tell you this."

Fang Yuan listened carefully and his expression grew grave.

"Loss of the path of martial arts, incomplete spiritual knight cultivation techniques...I did not expect the Secluded Mountain Prefecture and even Xia Country to be a barren wasteland for cultivators!"

"I wonder if the Da Qian Empire would be more interesting as compared to here."

He thanked Liu Yan as his mind revolved around the thought.

After all, even though Master Wenxin had given him the full inheritance describing the path to becoming a dream master, Fang Yuan was still clueless about the situation in Xia Country and the recent changes in the cultivators' world.

'I need no reminder to continue down my path as a dream master!'

Fang Yuan now realized the value of the inheritance in his hand.

Compared to the other spiritual knights who only had the badly damaged inheritance, Fang Yuan felt that he would be able to achieve much more than the other spiritual knights and would not walk into a dead-end.

Fang Yuan felt that given time and effort, he would be able to surpass Liu Yan's and Lu Renjia's level.

"So? What do you think?"

Liu Yan looked at Fang Yuan and grimaced.

"No...I was momentarily lost from too much information!"

Fang Yuan shook his head, "Furthermore, I do not know the situation of the cultivation world in the Da Qian Empire."

"There are rumours that path of martial arts is well developed in the faraway Da Qian Empire. They have already discovered the cultivation path after Wu Zong. This is unlike us here. Even if we have discovered the way ahead, we would selfishly keep it for ourselves..."

There are also many spiritual knights who possessed frightening inheritance. It is said that a single person could take on tens or even hundreds of our people..."

Liu Yan drifted off and sighed, "It's a shame that the Da Qian Empire is so far away with many dangers along the way. It is said that not even a Wu Zong or a spiritual knight would be able to reach there easily!"

'Da Qian? I would go there and have a look once I become a Dream Master!'

Fang Yuan silently made up his mind.

Fang Yuan had heard of Da Qian Empire before. Master Wenxin was from Da Qian who travelled to Xia Country to avoid trouble.

"I am really grateful for your advice!"

He asked, "I just wonder why you would tell me so much?"

"Haha...good question"

Liu Yan's eyes appeared bright, "I gave you so much information precisely because you are a part of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture! You are much better than that outsider, Lu Renjia!"

Fang Yuan did not know whether to laugh or cry. To think that the Prefecture Master was such a staunch supporter of this ideology.

"Since you are from Qinghe County, I believe that the Spirit Returning Sect Master Shi Yutong fell at your hands?"

Liu Yan closed his eyes and suddenly exclaimed, "That Lin Yin was cunning and recently appeared in Qinghe County. I did not expect you to act so quickly and capture them in one fell swoop!"

"They colluded and tried to kill me. I can only act first..."

Fang Yuan laughed bitterly, "That is the reason why I come to the Prefecture Master to seek protection!"

"Hmmm?"

Liu Yan laughed, "Haha...good, straight to the point! I like your frank and sincere character!"

Whether it was the first impression or the effect of the dream master, Liu Yan was starting to like Fang Yuan.

Elder Han and Elder Bian would not be able to die peacefully if they were to hear about Liu Yan's assessment of Fang Yuan.

"What do you want me to do? Send the army to Qinghe County to support you?"

Liu Yan looked at Fang Yuan jokingly.

"Of course not!"

Fang Yuan shook his head.

While Liu Yan appeared to like him, talk was cheap.

If Liu Yan would readily send in troops after hearing a few words from Fang Yuan, it would be because his brain was damaged.

No one so naïve would be able to hold the position of the Prefecture Master.

As such, Fang Yuan needed an object or say things that would sway Liu Yan.

Ling Yin was just a small gesture.

"Sending an army would waste too much time and effort. Furthermore, I was not hoping that the Prefecture Master would help me conquer the whole county..."

Fang Yuan blinked his eyes, "I was wondering if you are interested to quickly end the war?"

"Hmmmm? Speak!"

Liu Yan straightened up when he heard this. It was obvious that he was interested.

"It was only recently that I took down Shi Yutong and Ling Yin. Lu Renjia would not be able to receive such news so quickly!"

Fang Yuan had already thought of what to say on his journey, "The Spirit Returning Sect is currently without a leader. In order to stabilise the alliance, he would send a powerful person, even himself, to keep the situation at hand. This makes him an easy target to ambush. Even if we are not able to kill him, we would be able to gravely injure him!"

"Using a spiritual beast? He would be caught unprepared?"

Liu Yan's eyes glinted.

Chapter 119: Bone Melting Sect

"Wrong!"

Fang Yun shook his head. "I don't want to ambush Qinghe County's support, but rather, the Bone Melting Sect's Sect Master!"

The three sects, Spirit Returning, Bone Melting and Yellow Brothers Sect all had Wu Zongs at the helm controlling a cony each. Collectively, they gave strength to Lu Renjia's betrayal.

Furthermore, Lu Renjia was from the Bone Melting Sect!

"This way, we can remove the leader! If Prefecture Master would join us, we can cause great damage to the opposing alliance, disrupting their atmosphere!"

Fang Yuan said confidently.

Even though Liu Yan had three other counties under his name, these three counties were weak, especially Lieyang County. After the chaos, they could not recover and therefore could not give support.

Lu Renjia was an alchemy master and was therefore influential. Not only they were evenly matched, he still had the upper hand.

However, now that it was easy to take control over Qinghe County, the situation turned around.

"Mmm... Lu Renjia would surely send reinforcements to Qinghe County. This is a good opportunity for us to strike!"

Liu Yan nodded his head but did not say a word.

"Of course... If you feel that this plan is too dangerous, we can still head towards Qinghe County to deal with those who are assisting them. We can similarly gain control over the whole situation!"

Fang Yuan knew Liu Yan's considerations and added a line.

"No need!"

Liu Yan's red eyebrows twitched, and after a short while, he came to a decision. He stood up and walked forward. "If I don't decide now, trouble will ensue! Right now, the enemy is weak while I am strong. If I don't take this opportunity, wouldn't I be letting them have the opportunity to regroup?"

He knew how impressive an alchemy master's networking was. If he gave Lu Renjia any chance to regroup, he would be on the losing end.

"Pass down my orders. Get all the capital leaders and spiritual knights... To the main hall!"

Liu Yan exclaimed, as his voice travelled far.

"Let's not delay, now is the best time to move!"

Fang Yuan immediately agreed.

After making a decision, this Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master was rather decisive and did not think twice.

"Prefecture Master, Niu Dingtian, Leng Ning and Xiang Zilong reporting!"

"Keke... Brother Liu, I wonder where did the spiritual bird outside come from? It is majestic!"

...

After a short while, a number of martial artists entered the hall; they all harnessed elemental force.

Three of them wore the Chilled Metal Armour and had a sinister look. Every movement of theirs resembled a killer. They were all the Wu Zong capital leaders of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture armed forces.

Another old man was clad in white robes. Although he seemed a little crazy, he had a big build, slightly larger than Niu Dingtian.

"Spiritual knight?"

Fang Yuan looked at the person with a serious look.

From this old man, he felt a totally different Wood-type inner breath. He had the feeling of spring and life.

"Brother Mu, don't be rude!"

Liu Yan jokingly chided him and continued. "The spiritual bird outside belongs to Fang Yuan, Brother Fang. Don't you dare have any ideas on it!"

He turned and faced Fang Yuan. "This is my good friend, Daoist Mu Li. He had lived in seclusion and only offered his help when I wrote him a letter... He loves spiritual birds, and once he caught a 'Pure Yang Bird', which once guarded the Heaven Facing Peak for one year and one month, but sadly, he did not get anything in return..."

"Liu Yan, stop exposing me!"

Daoist Mu Li blew at his moustache before looking in Fang Yuan's direction. His expression changed to one of suspicion. "Wu Zong? Mmm? No, not right... Spiritual knight! Cultivating both martial arts and spiritual techniques at the same time, and still of such a young age! Monster!"

"Cough cough!"

Liu Yan almost choked on his saliva, and coughed repeatedly, afraid that there would be an internal conflict.

"Oh, it's Sect Master Fang!"

As for the other two capital leaders who heard that this young man could cultivate martial arts and spiritual techniques at the same time, and furthermore having both aspects entering the realm of elemental force, both of them became polite and greeted him.

"You're welcome!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand. "Daoist Mu Li is interested in my spiritual bird? Unfortunately, that black eagle of mine is rather proud and will not recognise any outsiders..."

"Ah... Then there's no choice!"

Daoist Mu Li sighed. "I have tried to, with much effort, catch a spiritual eagle. As I tried to tame it, it starved itself to death and did not succumb to me..... Ah..."

At this point, he sounded as regretful as he could possibly be.

"Young man, did you use any secret technique to tame this black eagle? Teach it to me! I'll teach you a wood-type spiritual spell in exchange for it, what do you think?!"

He looked at Fang Yuan in anticipation and almost went up to tug his sleeve to beg him.

"Mu Li..."

Liu Yan could not hold back. "Don't you already have a Wind Chasing Falcon? Isn't that enough?"

"Little Green is good, but the more the merrier... Brother Liu, you do not know what I am wishing for. I want to form an army of spiritual birds and change my Wood Elemental Temple to Five Birds Temple!"

Mu Li exclaimed with a straight face, which made Liu Yan almost burst into tears.

"Alright, I have gathered all of you to round up our strength and collectively attack the Bone Melting Sect's Sect Master, clean up the place and destroy Lu Renjia!"

With the wave of his hand, a feeling of death spread throughout the hall.

Hearing this, the seemingly joking Daoist Mu Li became serious.

"... This is what happened. Based on what Brother Fang has told us, Lu Renjie must have just received news and have sent out

reinforcements to assist Qinghe County. His own base is therefore weaker and is a good opportunity for us to strike. What do you guys think?"

Liu Yan explained the entire happening and looked at the capital leaders.

"We will follow your orders!"

Niu Dingtian, Xiang Zilong and Leng Ning were all his subordinates and therefore replied while kneeling down.

"Mmm... Although I want to attack the weaknesses of Lu Renjia, the earlier the war would end, the better it would be for the prefecture. I agree with what Master Fang had said, which is just to strike the Bone Melting Sect... Hehe, anyway we now have two spiritual birds at our disposal. If we use them properly, we can strike them by surprise!"

Daoist Mu Li shared his own view.

"I am for the same idea! Let's not delay any further, and leave now! Mu Li, call for your Wind Chasing Falcon too!"

Liu Yan changed to a long robe which glittered with a spiritual glow and arrived at a school behind the hall.

"Hehe... Good!"

Daoist Mu Li smiled, took out a bamboo whistle and blew hard into it. A sharp whistle travelled far and wide.

"Chirp!"

A large green bird shot down from the clouds like an arrow.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Seeing this, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle who was originally eating roasted meat could not hold back anymore. It flapped its wings and as the wind it created blew the Secluded Mountain Prefecture soldiers, it flew up and chased after the Wing Chasing Falcon.

"Hu Hu!"

On the school compound, sand and dust flew everywhere. Landed in the middle were two spiritual birds looking at each other, as though they were challenging each other.

"Good spiritual bird! Good spiritual bird!"

Daoist Mu Li enjoyed it very much, and he almost drooled.

Fang Yuan was examining the Wing Chasing Falcon.

It was aerodynamic and its feathers were a bright green. Its head was slightly smaller as compared to the Iron-tailed Black Eagle, and its breath seemed shorter too.

If the Iron-tailed Eagle was compared to a 4 Heavenly Gate martial artist, then the Wing Chasing Falcon should be an expert in inner force.

Even though it was as such, Fang Yuan could see a hint of unyieldingness in its eyes. It was not afraid of the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"I, Niu Dingtian and Master Fang will be together. Xiang Zilong, Leng Ning, you two shall ride the Chasing Wing Falcon and set off immediately!"

Fang Yuan leapt on to the Iron-tailed Black Eagle, comforted it before allowing Liu Yan to ride it as well. He felt a sense of pride as he waved his hands.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

"Chirp!"

Accompanying two chirps from the eagle, the Chasing Wing Falcon raced the Iron-tailed Black Eagle into the sky, and both of them disappeared into the horizon.

...

Cangyi County, White Bone Mountain.

This was where the Bone Melting Sect was. The first generation of the Bone Melting Sect's Wu Zong stumbled upon this spiritual land and transformed it into their base. The opening of Bone Melting Sect had been around 500 years.

With such a foundation, there were many Wu Zongs from the Bone Melting Sect, which went on continuously for many years. The Sect Master of Bone Melting Sect shook the Secluded Mountain with the Bone Melting Palm Technique and was even more well known than Shi Yutong.

The Bone Melting Sect now was a mess.

At the foot of the mountain, there were many new soldier camps, and one could hear them shouting orders at the base camp.

Since Lu Renjia's rebellion, the Bone Melting Sect was his most loyal supporter. Therefore, Lu Renjia decided to place his rebellion alliance base camp here, as a challenge to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture.

However, there was peace and tranquillity in the Bone Melting Sect, as spiritual energy filled the entire compound.

Lu Renjia crossed his legs and sat on a futon, and in front of him stood a cauldron as tall as a human. Charcoal flames were burning brilliantly beneath the cauldron, continuously giving off green flames which licked the base of the cauldron.

While looking at the flames, Lu Renjia's expression was one of worry.

"Master Lu, you are worried about your disciple?"

A scribe in white entered the room. He was middle-aged and had white sideburns. He held a foldable fan in his hand and looked suave. Just by his appearance, no one would associate him with the cruel Bone Melting Sect Sect Master as heard in the legends.

"That is right..."

Lu Renjia did not get up. He casually pointed to a futon to welcome the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master to sit down, before sighing. "Who would have predicted for such a big thing to happen to such a protected disciple of mine? I am responsible for the disappearance of Ling Yin and the chaos in Spirit Returning Sect."

"Heh... Shi Yutong is a useless piece of junk. Other than having looks, her martial arts is sh*t, and can even be abducted by a junior Wu Zong. She has brought shame to all of us!"

Bone Melting Sect Sect Master still did not know that Fang Yuan cultivated martial arts and spiritual techniques at the same time, and was full of dissatisfaction with Shi Yutong. He comforted Lu Renjia and said, "Master Lu, you need not worry. Did you not already sent Tiancan and Dique, the two brothers, as well as the Blood Demon to aid them in Qinghe County? With the three of them, what can a Wu Zong do?"

Chapter 120: Ambush

"Even if it is so, I still do not think it is safe!"

Lu Renjia frowned further. He got up and paced up and down before making up his mind, ordering, "Send down my order immediately, use the spiritual messenger! Order Blood Demon and the Crippled Brothers to abandon the mission and return immediately!"

"This..."

The blood drained from the face of the head of the Bone Melting Sect as he stuttered, "Sir are you afraid it might be...a trap?"

"Correct! If the Wu Zong who captured Shi Yutong was in cahoots with Old Liu, then they are trying to create a diversion!"

Lu Renjia paced around the room in a circle a few times. His thoughts were clearer, and he said, "Since we have to go, we must rally all the veteran martial artists together on this trip! I am not only going to foil Old Liu's sneaky plan, I am going to make him pay too!"

"Good!"

Just as the head of the Bone Melting Sect stood up, two loud shrill calls of an eagle pierced the air from the sky above.

"We're under attack!!!"

The deafening noise of the bell and drum reverberated through the air above the Bone Melting Sect. The junior disciples were completely out of control and were in utter chaos. However, the guards closer to the core group stood at high points and aimed their arrows towards the sky.

"Haha... I have been tolerating their nonsense for too long, it's payback time! Charge straight down, do not be frightened of the arrows!"

Liu Yan laughed heartily. With a stretch of his hand, six green fire dragons appeared in front of him, baring their teeth and claws as they roared threateningly. The dragons emitted blistering heat waves into their surroundings as they charged downwards at incredible speed.

"Voom voom!"

An archer's tower got struck by a flame of green fire and burst into flames immediately. The locked and loaded 8 Oxen Bowls caught fire in no time and the archers by the side were not spared the painful death, screaming in agony as they fell from the tower.

"Shoot! Shoot!"

The head of the Bone Melting Sect exploded with rage and flew onto a roof. He snatched away a huge bow and pulled the string to its maximum tension. The arrow shot out with amazing force towards the two spiritual birds.

Behind the head of the Bone Melting Sect, the disciples and elders of the sect who were originally in utter chaos eventually found their composure and got a hold of the situation. At the same time, several long-range weapons shot into the sky to meet the great enemy.

"Elemental force of heaven and earth, do my bidding!"

Liu Yan did a finger gesture as he shouted out the incantation. Immediately, two green and red fires burst out in front of Iron-tailed Black Eagle and Wind Chasing Falcon, as though forming a shield.

At the same time, a huge flame exploded in mid air and rained down like a meteor shower.

This was the spiritual fire. Even though it was in a small quantity, it was terrifying enough for most of the lower ranking disciples. To use it in such a big environment, it became a fire disaster in no time, lighting up all the beautifully constructed

buildings.

"Liu Yan! You old thief!"

Seeing this, the head of the Bone Melting Sect seethed with anger as he shouted, "One of us must die today!"

"Snap!"

He drew back the string on the bow as he prepared his next shot, but as he exerted too much force, the bow snapped into two.

"Lu Renjia...you old thief, show yourself!"

As Liu Yan's passions got intensified in the fight, he shouted out for his enemy.

Fang Yuan assessed the situation closely and was on his toes. With the dispersal of the powerful magical elemental force, Fang Yuan communicated with Iron-tailed Black Eagle as they dodged the lethal arrows shooting up from below. With the shield of fire, they could move about freely in the barrage of arrows.

'According to what Liu Yan said on the way here, Lu Renjia is an alchemy master. He hired a spiritual knight who goes by the name of Blood Demon and also has two servants who are Wu Zong martial artists going by the name of the Crippled Brothers! With the combined might of these people and the heads of three sects, this was almost enough to overpower the Secluded Mountain Prefecture!'

With the combination of powers of seven martial artists who had elemental force, it was more than enough to overpower the existing head of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture.

Before, this Liu Yan definitely had more than three generals in the secluded mountain. But after one of them rebelled, he fought another general to their deaths in the war earlier. This pattern continued which severely weakened the power of Liu Yan's forces.

'If I did not arrive, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture would be

wiped out even though they have two spiritual knights, three Wu Zongs and the scarily impressive power of Liu Yan! As for just now, if Liu Yan had dared to even use such that technique without Iron-tailed Black Eagle covering for him, he would definitely be encircled and trapped without a chance of survival!

"Chief Bai!"

Looking at the disaster unfold in front of him, Lu Renjia shook his head and said, "We are overpowered now, we must avoid the tip of the enemy's spear and head for open ground where the spiritual fire cannot work its magic to cut our losses!"

"As of now the enemy is pressing its advantage. Now that the Spirit Returning Sect is in trouble and the head of the Huang Kun Sect has rushed here, we should still not take the enemy on. All we can do now is to wait for Blood Demon and the rest to hurry back quickly!"

Combining all of their powers, it would be more than sufficient to deal with Fang Yuan, Liu Yuan and their spiritual beasts.

"Do not care about this sect now, head straight for the camps at the foot of the mountain to break out!"

"Woo woo!"

Earlier when the Bone Melting Sect was enveloped in flames, the army camps at the bottom of the mountain sprang into full alertness. Horns blared anxiously, and arrows were loaded into their bows. They were definitely more disciplined and ready than the Bone Melting Sect.

After all, it was the elite soldiers of the three counties who resided within the camps. They were a uniformed and legitimate force, not a bunch of rowdy disciples.

"Move!"

The head of the Bone Melting Sect winced and ignoring the pain in his heart, commanded loudly, "Disciples of Bone Melting Sect,

disperse and break out!"

This was a painful decision, but it was very effective.

After all, Liu Yan was just one person, even if he was more powerful, how many could he possibly kill?

Anyway, if the sect got burned down, it was just a matter of losing face. He could always rebuild it later. Even Liu Yan's own city got destroyed.

"Chase them!"

Upon seeing each other, the enemies raged further.

Without much effort, Liu Yan spotted Lu Renjia behind the head of the Bone Melting Sect and shouted angrily, "Prepare to die!"

"Bang! Bang!"

Several huge falls of fire formed on his arms and they crashed downwards from above, like from a flamethrower.

"Haha...you old devil you expanded everything you had, aren't you afraid that you might have went a bit too hard?"

Lu Renjia laughed and as he waved his hand three alchemy balls flew out.

"Voom!"

The white ball exploded in mid air and the temperature fell drastically immediately. The whole place became freezing cold and neutralised the raging fire.

'Even though this person is an alchemy master, it seems that he isn't that inflexible!"

Seeing this, Fang Yuan thought of an idea and silently ordered Iron-tailed Black Eagle to soar up higher.

How could spiritual knights and the Wu Zong act so speedily?

In no time, Lu Renjia and the head of the White Bone Sect cross the mountain and arrived at the foot of it.

Within the camp, a gust of dust sped towards Lu Renjia. The leader wore a yellow robe and had a thunderous voice as he shouted, "Master Lu, I will help you!"

"Be careful Chief Huang, this old devil got himself a spiritual eagle from somewhere which is even more powerful than the Wind Chasing Falcon!"

Seeing the head of the Yellow Brothers sect arrive personally to help him, Lu Renjia heaved a sigh of relief and cautioned him.

"Haha, do not worry Master Lu. This Liu Yan could not have possible expected me to be defenceless against his spiritual bird right?"

With a wave of his hand, the cover sheets on a few carriages were removed to reveal 5 unique looking crossbows. The arrows had several unknown prints on it and the arrow head looked slightly illuminated by a dull green light.

"Aim!"

"Fire!"

With a few shouts from the troops, the five cross bows let out a deafening roar.

"Bang!"

The tremendous recoil caused several carriages carrying the weapons to exploded instantly.

The power of such a gigantic crossbow was naturally tremendous.

"This..."

High in the air, Fang Yuan immediately felt anxious and realised danger was coming his way and commanded, "Iron-tailed Black Eagle, dodge to your right!"

"Shoo!"

Almost instantaneously after spiritual will was activated, a ray of green light passed through the shield of fire and brushed past the wings of Iron-tailed Black Eagle, shooting down some of its iron feathers.

"Bastards!"

By the side, Liu Yan thrust his five fingers outwards and flaming claw appeared, causing the other crossbow to combust into ash.

Iron-tailed Black Eagle was lucky that Fang Yuan pre-empted it and saved its life. However, the Wind Chasing Falcon next to it was not so lucky.

Along with the gasps of awe from the people, Wind Chasing Falcon increased its speed and dodged two of the arrows, but got hit by the last one in its wing. The arrow pierced into it and blood flowed out as it let out a painful shriek.

"Fantastic!"

Looking at the unsteady Wind Chasing Falcon fall towards the ground, Lu Renjia heaved a sigh of relief and said, "Your skills are incredible Chief Huang, you have helped us a lot!"

"Our sect started off constructing equipment and mechanisms and I made this crossbow myself. The most crucial parts of the crossbow are made from iron of top quality. The arrows were also further enhanced with the inscription of spiritual prints. Even if they had the protection of feathers of 4 Heavenly Gates level, the arrow could still penetrate through!"

The head of the Huang Kun sect boasted with satisfaction.

"Surround them and kill them off!"

Seeing Wind Chasing Falcon fly closer to the ground, rays of frosty light shot out of Lu Renjia's eyes.

"Just us? Unless the entire army surrounds them, if not..."

Upon seeing the people on top of the spiritual birds, the head of the White Bone Sect lost a bit of confidence.

Would the two highly skilled Wu Zong and spiritual knight even stupidly fall for the trap and allow the army to surround them?

"Do not worry, even without the help of the main force, we can take them on ourselves!"

Lu Renjia winced a little and then painfully drew out an item and said, "With this, it doesn't matter if our opponents double in force, we can delay them here until Blood Demon and the Crippled Brothers return! When they do, it will be time for Liu Yan to die!"

"This is...the Spiritual Array Map?"

The eyes of the head of Huang Kun sect lit up as he licked his lips and said, "This is such a rare and precious item you have!"

"Brother Huang, you flatter me!"

Lu Renjia smiled grimly and said, "Spiritual Array masters are no longer in existence in this area. This Spiritual Array Map is the last of its kind and it can only be used once. To do so will be to spend half of my life's possessions..."

"Sssss.... I've long heard that it was difficult to become a Spiritual Array master. But if one were to succeed, it would be extremely powerful and difficult to defeat."

How much possessions did an alchemy master have? Even if it was just a fraction, it was still enough to make any sect desirous.

To achieve the Spiritual Array Map at such a huge cost, its powers and effects must be devastating.

To be able to see Lu Renjia be so confident of delaying and holding up such formidable martial artists, it was a sight only a privileged few could enjoy!

"Chase!"

The heads of the Huang Kun Sect and the Bone Melting Sect

made eye contact and hurriedly followed behind Lu Renjia as they moved towards the area where Wind Chasing Falcon fell.

"Erm!"

Fang Yuan who was still in the air caught sight of this immediately and grew suspicious, "They are extremely daring to leave the protection of the army and come out on their own!"

Based on their flexibility, in order to chase up to people like themselves, the only way to do so was to leave behind the main army.

But to so courageously do so when they were clearly at a disadvantage, they must have something they were relying on for support!

"Hehe...Could it be that Lu Renjia thinks that just because he behaves so daringly I wouldn't dare to fight him?"

Liu Yan pointed somewhere deep into the mountains and said, "Let's go there!"

Deep in the mountains and the jungle was where the main army could not enter easily, which was also where they could effectively execute their techniques to the maximum extent.

Chapter 121: The Battle

"Wuwa, my Little Green... I will banish them to hell and wipe their existence off the face of the world!"

Within the forest.

Trees in an entire forest were being cut down, and on the ground, blood was flowing everywhere.

"Chirp! Chirp..."

Chasing Wing Falcon tried its best to lift its head up and weakly chirped. It looked like it was out of breath, which affected the Iron-tailed Black Eagle which was at one side, and it did not have the urge to joke around with it anymore.

"Good!"

Liu Yan twitched his eyebrows. "Instead of wasting time, why not hurry up and heal it, then bring it away from here. Otherwise, it would be too late when this place becomes a Wu Zong and spiritual knight battlefield, and any spiritual beast who is going to get injured because of the battle deserves it."

"Yes of course!"

Daoist Mu Li froze, and slowly became serious. "Little Green, hold on! Spring breeze rain, strike!"

A green flash shot out from his palm, which transformed the fog in the air into water droplets, and it landed on the wound of the Wind Chasing Falcon.

"Mm?"

What happened next shocked Fang Yuan.

Under the cover of the raindrops, it was as though there was a layer of cloud over the Wind Chasing Falcon's wound. The bleeding stopped immediately and recovered... After the spiritual technique was over, what was left behind was a scab. Other than

the surrounding being bald with no feathers, it was no different than before.

'Wood-type spiritual spells... Healing?'

Seeing such a healing effect, Fang Yuan almost vomited. If there were more spiritual knights around like Daoist Mu Li, then doctors would be rendered useless already.

"Brother Fang, let your Iron-tailed Black Eagle watch the battle with the Wind Chasing Falcon from afar!"

Liu Yan waved his hand and briefed the rest. "Since Lu Renjia is approaching us even after knowing that we have two spiritual birds, he must have some backing or tricks up his sleeves."

"Understood!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. He used his spiritual will to instruct the Iron-tailed Black Eagle to fly high. At the moment, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle shot up into the sky. Even though the Wind Chasing Falcon's wound was recovered, it opened up again after it tried to use force to flap its wings, and the falcon shrieked. It used its claws to run into the forest and disappeared.

"Alright. I would like to see what tricks Lu Renjia has up his sleeves?"

Liu Yan laughed heartily, as though he was very generous.

On the other hand, Fang Yuan was less confident and frowned. With a wave of his hand, a layer of fog appeared but was not obvious since it was in the jungle.

"Fog?"

Liu Yan and Daoist Mu Li were both spiritual knights and knew that this was Fang Yuan's doing. However, using their spiritual will, they could not find anything special about it and both of them were surprised.

"They're here!"

Just when Daoist Mu Li was curious and wanted to ask about it, Liu Yan exclaimed.

From the forest came three silhouettes. The one in front was Lu Renjia. The Bone Melting Sect Sect Master and the Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master were on his left and right respectively, and since they were following him from behind, it was obvious that they were his subordinates.

They did not bring a single martial artist who was below the realm of elemental force because they knew that in such a battle, they would not aid but only burden them.

"Keke... Old fogey Lu, how dare you come to find us with only two Wu Zongs? Do you want me to grant you your death?"

Liu Yan looked at Lu Renjia's expression and could tell that he was on his highest alert, but up front, he appeared as though he was mocking him.

"Hmm!"

Lu Renjia exclaimed, as he scanned across from the Secluded Mountain capital leaders, to Daoist Mu Li and ended up staring at Fang Yuan.

"You are... the new Wu Zong from Qinghe County?"

He was the only unfamiliar face present and was the youngest of all, and therefore Lu Renjia could not be mistaken.

"That's right. I am also the one who captured your disciple, Ling Yin!"

He was unsettled and took a few steps away from the group, all the while staring at Lu Renjia.

"Good! Very good!"

Lu Renjia unexpectedly laughed. "I have already sent Blood Demon and Tiancan Dique brothers to Qinghe County. Do you think that your servants and useless guards can still survive?"

Although he had already sent the message to recall them back, he did not mind to use this piece of news to worry this young Wu Zong's mind - Since Fang Yuan had kept all his magical energy, Lu Renjia could only see him as a normal Wu Zong.

Liu Yan looked at Mu Li for a while, both suspicious of what Lu Renjia said, but both did not dare to expose the truth.

"Do anything you want to my subordinates..."

Fang Yuan waved his hands. "But if they want to save Ling Yin, they will have to penetrate the defences of the Prefecture Master's Mansion!"

"That's right!"

Liu Yan stood out too. "Ling Yin has been captured and held in my water prison, hehe... Master Lu is a respectable person and will never know where that place is. But that is fine, you will join her there very quickly."

"Very well, it seems that all of you are against me, and deserve to die!"

Lu Renjia's expression changed and seemed even more confident.

"Quickly strike!"

As a spiritual knight, they had the ability to feel their blood gushing and the insecurity in their mind. Liu Yan shouted and made the first move.

"Six royal levels, hear my command... Heavenly fire burn the field!"

"Chila!"

Six beams of light shot out from his body and became imageries of their own in mid-air. They lighted up the entire sky, and suddenly fell downwards!

This power shocked Lu Renjia, and he could only retreat.

"Chance!"

The Wu Zongs and spiritual knights were all talents, so how could they miss this great opportunity to strike?

While the opponents were busy retreating, Fang Yuan and Niu Dingtian, together with the Secluded Mountain capital leaders rushed forward.

"He! The wood element of the Heaven and Earth, bless! Bind!"

Even though Daoist Mu Li did not advance, both his hands each had a daoist talisman which flew forward. One of it became a layer of green flash, which blessed the few Wu Zongs in front, granting them greater powers.

As for the other daoist talisman, it dug its way into the ground and disappeared.

"Ping! Ping!"

Beside Lu Renjia and company were green vines with thorns appearing from the ground. These vines twisted around and circled inwards, like a cage.

"Spiritual Peak Technique, crush!"

With flames coming from above, Wu Zongs attacking from in front, and thorny vines from the back, Lu Renjie broke into cold sweat. He took out a cauldron pill and threw it forward.

"Rumble!"

An image of a small cauldron appeared, which grew in size under the crimson flames. It became the cauldron which supported the Heaven and Earth, as it contained the green flames in the sky. It then transformed into many smaller flames which dispersed in all directions.

The vines burst into flames after coming into contact with these smaller flames, and could no longer move.

After this single move, a distinct crack appeared on the small

cauldron, which broke Lu Renjia's heart.

"This is likely to be a one-off magical weapon, or has a certain limit! Follow me!"

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes and tilted his head, as a green flame flew across his hair. It landed on an ancient tree behind him, which burst into flames and became a large torch.

"Buy some time for me!"

Lu Renjia looked ferocious, took out the Spiritual Formation Image and exclaimed.

"Alright!"

Bone Melting Sect Sect Master looked at Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master.

They were experienced Wu Zongs. Although they could not take two opponents each, they could still stall time. They took a few steps forward and blocked Fang Yuan and the rest.

'Now!'

No one knew why Fang Yuan suddenly smiled cheekily. "Ecstasy Spell!"

"Whooo!"

The mild mountain fog surrounding the area thickened and covered Lu Renjia and company.

"Eh?"

"This is..."

In reality, the usage of this Ecstasy Spell could only at most put a 4 Heavenly Gate martial artist into a deep sleep. As for Wu Zongs and spiritual knights, they could easily awaken once their elemental force was focused.

However, a fierce battle with no regard for their lives would be the biggest weakness of everyone.

"Kill!"

"Die!"

...

Seeing how both the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master and the Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master were in shock, Niu Dingtian and the other Wu Zongs did not hesitate to use their strongest skills.

"Demonic Bull Fist!"

Niu Dingtian exclaimed as he became muscular in an instant. As his originally large build increased in size once more, he appeared to be a small giant.

He also broke through Wu Zong using the Rough Breathing Technique and became a crazy demon during battle. As his fists struck out, it was like two large and heavy hammers.

"Rumble!"

The Bone Melting Sect Sect Master regained his consciousness in a while, but the moment he came to, he already saw Niu Dingtian's fist at his nose.

"Ah! Bone Melting Palm!"

He used all his elemental force in his right palm which seemed invincible.

"Peng!"

As the fist and palm met, both of them were left in shock.

"What a strong and brute fellow!"

The Bone Melting Sect Sect Master took a step back. It was obvious that he was at a disadvantage, and thought to himself. "Could it be that I was being ambushed by the fog, and you tried to hurt me?"

His Bone Melting Palm was the unique counter to rough techniques and was the nemesis to Niu Dingtian.

However, since he lost the advantage of taking the first move, every following move was pushing him to an even more disadvantageous situation.

"Dragon Subduing Kick!"

As Niu Dingtian was pushed away, Xiang Zilong followed up from above. Both his legs struck out continuously and were as sharp as a knife. It could even be comparable to magical weapons!

"Go and die!"

The Bone Melting Sect Sect Master retreated continuously, which unknowingly made the Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master stand out.

"Condensing Frost!"

Leng Ning appeared feminine yet masculine, and it was hard to tell if he was a male or a female. His opening strike was devastating. There was frost on his hands, as they struck out in an unpredictable manner. Suddenly, he leapt in front of Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master.

The Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master was skilled in making mechanisms but was still comparatively weaker in martial arts when compared with the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master. Since he was also left in a state of confusion after the ambush from the fog, he could only rush and dodge a sword strike towards his chest, but there was a slit on his body.

"Run!"

With the wound on his body and the possibility of death, he did not hesitate to make his escape.

If he did not run, he would die here!

As a Wu Zong, he fully trusted his spiritual sense.

Unfortunately, his spiritual sense would become his biggest weakness against a dream master skilled in confusion.

Leng Ning was not the only one attacking the Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master!

As the Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master tried to escape, Fang Yuan rushed forward like a giant eagle, and clawed at his weak point!

Chapter 122: The Formation

"Aahh!"

The Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master let out a cry.

His accurate martial artist intuition had caused his death!

His spiritual heart had been greatly hit.

He had no choice but to hit back by pounding on the Fang Yuan's chest with both of his palms. This method would cause both of them to be injured.

If Fang Yuan was persistent in taking away his life, he would want Fang Yuan to be seriously injured as well!

Of course, the sect master didn't want such outcome to happen ultimately.

'Please stop!'

He made a move while having that thought in his mind.

Unfortunately, God seemed to have forsaken him. Fang Yuan, who was right in front of him, gave him a wicked smile and the force from his hands was very strong. Fang Yuan seemed like he was not afraid to die.

"Even Heaven wants me to die!"

The sect master was sighing in his heart but was putting more force in his hands. "Let's not figure out who is better than the other and we shall perish together!"

"Peng!"

Just when the sect master had that idea popped up into his head, his brain was torn by Fang Yuan's hands and the content from his brain started to flow out, which made this move a fatal one!

At the same time, the sect master used both of his palms that were filled with surging elemental force and make a print on Fang

Yuan's chest.

From the loud noise, Fang Yuan was pushed back with much force and his clothing was torn into pieces, which revealed his muscular chest and his tanned skin. Fang Yuan was not injured at all.

As a person who had made a breakthrough through the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique for Wu Zong, this achievement had brought him a benefit now.

Even though his body was in a good condition now, it was not the best!

The Sect Head hastily retaliated without preparation, which prevented him from exerting his full strength. Furthermore, he was already killed by Fang Yuan, hence the force in his palms became even weaker.....

"Hoo....."

Fang Yuan exhaled a long breath and the colour of his chest turned back to its normal colour. However, he was feeling intense pain in his chest.

"A Wu Zong indeed, this comeback before his death is quite powerful actually!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chest and thought about it silently. He didn't see the shocking expressions of the people that were watching them.

"What? The Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master is dead?"

Bone Melting Sect Sect Master saw what happened and couldn't believe his eyes. "Oh my god.....he is also a Wu Zong and he is dead just by being torn through the head like a watermelon....."

Looking at the dead sect master who was as powerful as him, the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master immediately had the intention of retreating.

He was a sect master of the Bone Melting Sect and had control of one of the counties. Everyone was fearful of the Bone Melting Sect in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture and how could he easily fold here?

"Is it still not done yet, Master Lu?"

The Bone Melting Sect Sect Master retreated to where Lu Renjia was.

"You think producing such thing is an easy task? Also, we still have to deal with Liu Yan's Fire-type spiritual spell!"

Even though he was rushing to set up the spiritual array, Lu Renjia did not let go of the small cauldron that was in his hand.

An illusion of a giant cauldron then appeared and it engulfed Lu Renjia in it and he was far from the confrontation with Liu Yan.

Liu Yan was not to be provoked as with his Fire-type spiritual spell, Lu Renjia's cauldron would be easily broken into pieces even if there was restraint.

"You shall die! 9 into 1!"

With the execution of the spiritual spell, the 9 green fire dragons flying in the sky suddenly let out a long roar, before combining to become one green giant dragon. The giant dragon then flew straight down from the sky.

"Aahh....with my broken cauldron and my blood, an emerald green destruction shall ensue!"

Seeing this destructive scene, Lu Renjie bit his tongue and spat out a mouthful of blood on the cauldron.

"Kacha! Kacha!"

There were many crack marks on the cauldron and was expanding. In the end, the small cauldron exploded and there was a small green pill floating in mid-air. It was giving out a shocking amount of spiritual force. The pill suddenly went up into the sky

and caused the surrounding to be red in colour.

The green fire dragon who was in that area had started to become calm and the fire in the dragon was extinguished.

"Emerald Blood Heart Pill? Lu Renjia cultivated his whole life together with this pill, and yet he was willing to sacrifice it....."

Liu Yan shouted, "This person is preparing for a stronger move, we need to destroy what he has with him right now!"

"Yes, Master!"

Niu Dingtian, Xiang Zilong and a few others acknowledged and pounced on Lu Renjia.

Unfortunately, they were too late.

"Hehe....puff.....it's finally complete!"

Lu Renjia spat out a mouthful of blood and gave a joyful look as he looked at the array map he was holding.

"The 4 spiritual poles shall combine together. The Grand Rock Spirit, heed my command, form the array in all 8 directions!"

With blood on his mouth, Lu Renjia chanted the curse quickly. Throwing the spiritual array map towards Liu Yan, he shouted, "Go!"

"Xiu!"

With a flash of a spiritual light, a blurry light started to shine from the sky and it engulfed Fang Yuan, Liu Yan and the others.

"Whoosh!"

The earth shook and a few giant rocks started to break through from the underground and rise to form like a giant maze.

"Is this....a spiritual array?"

Liu Yan's voice could be heard from far and it started to get softer till there it couldn't be heard.

"We are being separated? A spiritual array is indeed powerful. I have not expected this to happen!"

Fang Yuan touched the hard rock that was right in front of him and he could feel a cold texture, which meant that this spiritual array was not fake.

"Eagle Claw Palm!"

He stretched out his hand and all his fingers became like eagle's claws. He then grabbed one big piece of the giant rock and twisted it. The broken pieces became in powder form and got blown away by the wind...

"The foundations are tough. It seems like it will not be easy to break this rock!"

After spending much effort, he managed to break through a wall and came to a conclusion.

He was not familiar with spiritual arrays, but there was one thing he was clear about: it had to either trap, kill, or confuse.

"The stone array formed a maze, but it is not lethal. It is just a trap array and is not dangerous. The only worry is that we might be split and taken down one by one!"

"I remembered that I was not far from the rest when the spiritual array was activated....."

Fang Yuan then put his ear by a rock and listen to the surroundings.

....

"This is.....the spiritual array?"

Outside of the maze, the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master was staring at the stone maze and was almost speechless. "You have an uncanny workmanship indeed! I heard that a big sect in the Da Gan Empire had invited a spiritual array master to produce an array. If the Bone Melting Sect had done that as well, would there be such

things happening now?"

"Master Lu, are you able to make a drive to the array so that all of them will be killed?"

Thinking about the losses he had incurred today, the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master felt disgusted and was looking at Lu Renjia with a hopeful look.

"Dream on! This is just a trap array. Its purpose is to trap people not to kill people! I am not as powerful as the array master, hence how am I able to change the purpose of the array?"

Lu Renjia's face was very pale. "Also, in order to maintain this array, I have to inject my elemental force into it. You can help me and take over for a while!"

"Hmm?!"

As he placed both of his hands on the array map and felt a suction sucking his elemental force away from him, the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master's face also became pale.

With this suction speed, his elemental force would be exhausted in just a short period of time!

Luckily, Lu Renjia was not hurting him. Lu Renjia closed his eyes to rest after swallowing a few spiritual pills. He then passed a medicine bottle to the sect master and said, "This is a bottle of Elemental Recovery Powder, and can aid in the recovery of your elemental force. You will need to hold on for at least another hour!"

"Damn it..."

Lu Renjia felt a little angry as he mentioned that. "If from the start, we had set up the array map and I was not injured, I would have been able to maintain this array on my own and you could have entered the array together with the Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master and break through the array if you both don't meet Liu Yan!"

"No one expected the other party to be that powerful. The teenager's spiritual spell is powerful that it has killed the Yellow Brothers Sect Master..."

Looking at the corpse, the Bone Melting Sect Master had a lingering fear.

"So long as we are able to maintain this, Blood Demon, Tiancan and Dique will reach here in the end!"

Lu Renjia sighed and cursed. "Damn this Old Liu, he had managed to find a good location. If we were on a flat land, I would have called for an army of soldiers to kill them no matter how many men it would take to kill!"

It was not practical for such an attack in the mountains.

It was very troublesome for the army to transport the heavy equipment up the mountains like the ordinance and the armour.

Even if the elite forces were sent in, they also couldn't gain the upper hand just by pushing people forward to attack. There were more disadvantages than advantages.

Hence, Lu Renjia and the Bone Melting Sect Master could only choose to trap them for a long period of time while waiting for their reinforcements to come.

....

"The array dao is indeed profound... This stone maze seems to touch the edge of universe dao, which is actually space dao! We're lucky that Lu Renjia is not an actual spiritual array master and is unable to unleash the full potential of this array. Otherwise, we would be in a more dire predicament!"

Inside the maze, Fang Yuan sighed while breaking the stone wall.

In fact, he was overestimating the power of Lu Renjia and the Bone Melting Sect Master.

From the cultivations of the two of them, they could only

maintain this array and could not control what was happening inside the array. Hence, this was quite dumb in a sense.

"Who is there?"

The sound from the breaking of the rock shocked everyone that was on the side. In the tunnel, a deep voice was heard.

"Is it Leader Niu? I'm Fang Yuan!"

Fang Yuan recognised Leader Niu's voice.

"Haha.....it is Brother Fang indeed!"

Niu Dingtian came out quickly and said, "This place is so deserted that it has almost suffocated me to death!"

"Hmm, this is a spiritual array and is very mysterious. We better hurry and find the city master or else we would get broken through!"

Fang Yuan then listened to the surroundings for any sound with his ear by the rock.

"I have tried this method myself but it is useless.....or else I would not be scurrying here like a fly..."

Niu Dingtian said a few words and saw Fang Yuan getting up. Fang Yuan went towards a branch road confidently.

'Normal people will not be able to detect such small changes. However, I am a dream master and my magical energy is much higher as compared to the other spiritual knights. Hence, I am different from the rest and able to detect these small changes!'

Fang Yuan had an idea. "Even though this spiritual array is magical, the person who initiated this array is lousy. If I am able to find Liu Yan, we will probably have a chance to force our way out of this array!"

Only a spiritual array master could control the array on the inside and cause endless sufferings.

As for Lu Renjia and this god damn array, they were definitely inferior.

"However, it is commendable that they are able to trap 3 Wu Zongs and 3 spiritual knights for such a long period of time with just an array map..."

Chapter 123: Victory

"Master Lu, something's not right!"

After a short while, outside the stone maze, the Bone Melting Sect Master's expression changed. "The array map is sucking in too much of my elemental force, I can only hold on for a while more!"

"How is this possible?"

Lu Renjia shook his head, surprised. "Could it be that they are destroying the array from inside, forcing the spiritual array to start repairs and use up more elemental force?"

Although he was not an array master, he still roughly knew about it and did not use the array blindly; it was an accurate prediction.

"A single Wu Zong or spiritual knight cannot have such destructive power, they are combining forces!"

"What should we do?"

Bone Melting Sect Master shouted. "Master Lu, think of an idea!"

"I am an alchemy master, not a spiritual array master, how would I know?"

Lu Jiaren rolled his eyes. "Even though they might be together, it would still remain difficult to break out of this spiritual array..."

"Ping!"

At the end of his sentence, a loud noise came from the top of the stone array.

"Heavenly fire shall burn the field!!!"

Liu Yan exclaimed, and green flames exploded, causing many large rocks to fly into the sky in all directions.

"Whoosh!"

After the large flame at the top of the array, the entire stone maze started to form web-like cracks spreading throughout the entire array. The spiritual array crumbled down with the sound of breaking wood, like a sandcastle.

"Ah!"

The Bone Melting Sect Sect Master screamed, and looked at the array map in his hands.

At this moment, a small fire grew from the centre of the map and spreaded across the entire map. In a short while, the entire map burnt into ashes.

This was not the doing of Liu Yan, but the one-off nature of the spiritual array map. After usage, it would be destroyed.

"Haha... Lu Renjia, you're good!"

Amidst the dust, Liu Yan stood out. "Impressive that you could find an array map. If you used it during a battle, I'm afraid my brothers and I would die. Now, it seems like the Heavens want me to take care of you, and destroy you!"

Although he was brimming with confidence, he unknowingly looked at the calm and composed Fang Yuan.

The Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master knew that if not for Fang Yuan's ability to feel around within the array, even he himself would be trapped inside! He had no way to deal with his array.

It seemed that it was heaven's will that his newest alliance member was Fang Yuan, and not any other person!

"Let's go!"

Seeing how Liu Yan and company broke through the array, Lu Renjia and the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master were shocked out of their wits, and unanimously decided to run.

"Follow them!"

Liu Yan would not let this opportunity go, and commanded.

"Iron-tailed Black Eagle!"

Fang Yuan shouted into the sky. From the clouds, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle appeared and landed on the ground, allowing Fang Yuan to easily leap on its back.

"What a pity that my Wind Chasing Falcon is injured, otherwise..."

Taoist Mu Li mumbled to himself, but was not slower than Liu Yan as he sat on the eagle's back.

Even though the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was a spiritual beast and was rather large in size, the addition of three humans on its back made it tired. The remaining three Wu Zongs had to use their own Lightness Skill to chase after Lu Renjia.

"Haha... Lu Renjia! Where can you go?"

Liu Yan stood on the Black Eagle and shouted, while on the other hand as Lu Renjia witnessed this scene, he became desolated.

He never would have guessed that this spiritual eagle had such a spiritual property and would hide in the clouds and only come out once its owner was freed from the stone maze!

As the spiritual beast chased after him, it was almost impossible for him to get away.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

In a moment, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle landed in front of Lu Renjia and blocked his way.

Fang Yuan and Liu Yan jumped down from the eagle's back, and chose their opponents.

Using the analogy of picking the rotten oranges to squeeze, Fang Yuan was against the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master, leaving Lu Renjia to Liu Yan, his nemesis.

As for Taoist Mu Li, he sat on the eagle's back, as his body gave out spiritual light, as though he was preparing some spiritual techniques.

'You cunning old fogey!'

Fang Yuan scolded him in his mind, looked at his opponent, and was not worried a single bit.

Even though the name of Bone Melting Sect Sect Master was well heard-of in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture through the Bone Melting Palm technique used to counter rough techniques, but what more?

Even if his opponent was focused, Fang Yuan was still unafraid; this was disregarding the Sect Master's injury and his depleted elemental force. He was pale and seemed like he would fall without Fang Yuan even touching him.

"Do you have any last words?"

Fang Yuan shook his head and came straight to the point.

"I..."

Bone Melting Sect Sect Master could recognise Fang Yuan.

Among the enemies that he faced today, other than Liu Yan, it was this young man Fang Yuan who left the deepest impression in him.

He could disguise himself as a Wu Zong until he used his Ecstasy Spell, which revealed his identity as a spiritual knight, which showed that he had foresight.

Furthermore, Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master, who was on par with him, also died under Fang Yuan's claw!

Now that Fang Yuan focused on him, together with the other three Wu Zongs, and another spiritual knight from above, he had nowhere to go!

He was in such a dire situation; Lu Renjia wasn't any better.

"Thief Lu!"

Looking at the desolate Lu Renjia, Liu Yan was excited. "On the day when you betrayed me, did you ever think that this day would come?"

"Heh!"

Lu Renjia chuckled. "If I cannot be the king, then beggar it shall be. I am just not resigned to fate that the Heavens want me dead!"

At this point, he looked at Fang Yuan, and he seemed depressed.

That was only natural.

If Fang Yuan did not join the Secluded Mountain Prefecture alliance, Liu Yan would not have the guts to attack and even succeed!

Without this sneak attack, Lu Renjia could prepare and regroup before attacking, and could surely defeat Liu Yan and claim the appointment of Prefecture Master!

Unfortunately, all these had just become a dream.

Of course, if Fang Yuan knew his current thoughts, he would have scoffed.

He had decided his fate the moment he pulled the Spirit Returning Sect into his alliance.

Furthermore, there was also Ling Yin by Shi Yutong's side to aid her, and under such circumstances, why would he not attack Lu Renjia to destroy the source of the problem?

...

"Whoosh!"

In such a short period of time, there was a sudden change to the entire situation."

A blood flash appeared from the forest like a quick arrow being fired, and in the forest a silhouette could be seen.

"Don't harm him!"

After the blood flash, Tiancan and Dique rushed forward as well, panicking.

While he was at his wits end, Lu Renjia's saviors had arrived!

"Die!"

Seeing the change to the entire situation, Fang Yuan immediately took action.

As he exclaimed, his paralyzing scream was much stronger than before, even a few folds stronger! Using his magical energy as his foundation, together with his dream master's Ecstasy Spell, even spiritual knights would be stunned for the moment!

"Kacha!"

Using this opportunity, he rushed in front of the confused Bone Melting Sect Master, and with his right hand becoming a claw, he crushed his neck without hesitation.

"Ping!"

As his corpse landed on the ground, it was lit into flames by Liu Yan's green flames, and became ashes.

Seeing Lu Renjia's reinforcements approaching, Liu Yan knew that he might have the chance to flip the entire situation around, and thus used his ultimate technique.

"Let the flames burn! Let Heaven and Earth be a furnace!"

Flames surrounded him; a large amount of green flames rose up as he attempted to end Lu Renjia's life.

However, Lu Renjia was an alchemy master and was unafraid of flames. If Liu Yan was not of higher cultivation than him, it would be hard for Liu Yan to pressure him with his flames.

Lu Renjia put on a silver cloak. He fought the fire while at the same time retreated.

"Ah... You force me to do this!"

From the heat of the battle, a loud voice was heard, and there was a shocking spiritual pressure everywhere.

It was obvious that Lu Renjia used some methods as an ultimatum against Liu Yan. He spit out a mouthful of blood, and as his silver cloak became tattered, he advanced forward, as he seemed to rejoin the Blood Demon and company.

"Bless! Restrict!"

In mid-air, Taoist Mu Li's spiritual spell was also completed. With the flick of his wrist, numerous green flashes struck down.

Fang Yuan was protected by a spiritual glow and felt rather warm. He slowly regained the energy that he exhausted previously, but on the other hand, for Lu Renjia, he became visibly slower than before.

"Go!"

His eyes became bloodshot, and he bit on a spiritual pill which he hid in between his teeth. He seemed to be unaffected by the spiritual spell and almost arrived into the safety and protection of the blood flash.

"Go!"

"Whoosh!"

Suddenly, an emerald flash shot like a rainbow stretching across the sky, and in front of Blood Demon, it pierced through Lu Renjia's neck!

"Cough cough..."

Lu Renjia fell to the ground. As the emerald flash dissipated, a weird looking blade appeared, and his expression changed.

Never would he know that he would die under his own weapon!

"Master!"

As the blood flash weakened, two shadows appeared from behind. There were Tiancan and Dique. Both of them were kneeling on the ground and were crying as they looked at Lu Renjia's corpse.

"All these remaining are evil as well, do not let any one of them escape!"

Liu Yan's moustache was covered in blood, and commanded the three Wu Zongs, including Niu Dingtian. "Wipe them all out!"

"Yes Master!"

Niu Dingtian and company agreed, and surrounded the few who remained.

...

After a few days, the news that shocked the entire Xia Country spreaded.

The outside world thought that the fight within the Secluded Mountain Prefecture would last incredibly long, but in fact, it ended quicker than anyone could ever expect.

The Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master Liu Yan took the opportunity, personally led his alliance into a dangerous territory to kill Lu Renjia, and at the same time remove the Bone Melting Sect Sect Master and the Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master.

Including the previously captured Shi Yutong, the entire opposing alliance was completely wiped out, and the rebels were defeated.

Furthermore, the two Wu Zongs Tiancan and Dique were surrounded and killed, as they accompanied their master.

As for Blood Demon, he had foresight and executed a mysterious Blood Escaping Technique to successfully get away, which made him the only remaining rebel left.

Liu Yan became increasingly well-known, but as the biggest

contributor, Fang Yuan remained low profile and remained unknown to many.

Chapter 124: Reward

Back in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City.

Half a month had gone by. As the war was over, civilians who had left their houses to escape the war were returning and this made the city a little more lively.

Back in one of the magnificent guest rooms in the city master's mansion, Fang Yuan sat down with both of his eyes closed and had drifted into his dream world.

Not long after, he opened his eyes and was reminiscing. "This pathway to become a dream master.....is indeed magical and mysterious!"

As he reached the stage of a dream master, he could fully control his own dream world. Even though it had been stabilised, if he were not to incur any damage mentally which could cause him to collapse mentally, he would definitely be able to dominate his own world!

Just then, he went back to the time when he was young and explored that world again. He even went to the dream in that time and relived his life again which was full of joyful experiences.

The feeling that he had gotten couldn't be described with words.

"That world.....is too real...."

Also, Fang Yuan had many more guesses with regards to this dream world.

"Or maybe.....this dream did really exist and I was there. Also, it didn't even know that that was my hometown and I had managed to catch up with the 'crossing'. The two souls from the real and dream worlds had started to combine together and caused the dream I had as a young child to appear now in my memories?"

He thought through this and took another glance at his stats

window.

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 10

Spirit: 10

Magic: 8.6

Profession: Dream Master (Dream accessing)

Cultivation: [Dream Master (1st Tier) (Fused Elemental Force)],
Wu Zong

Technique: [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 13) (???)],
Ecstasy Spell, Shadowstep,

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 4)]"

Once he entered the dream world, he would have the chance to cultivate himself. Fang Yuan was very satisfied that his magic had improved again.

"My current magic is probably higher than that of Liu Yan.....I'm also starting to attract a lot of attention..."

He had also realised that when he had exterminated Lu Renjia, the power that he had displayed was shocking.

When there was war, it was better for one's allies to be stronger. However, when the war was over, being more powerful than another would only cause jealousy.

As he had expected such things would likely to happen, he had purposely been on a low profile. He showed that he had no intention of gaining any power to prevent any people from being jealous of him.

Anyway, with his current skills, not many would dare to provoke him or take away his share. It was actually benefitting Fang Yuan when he kept a low profile as he would be regarded as someone powerful but had nothing against the rest of the world, like Taoist

Mu Li.

Indeed, Liu Yan was satisfied with Fang Yuan and Fang Yuan had enjoyed his hospitality for quite a long period of time.

"Is Master Fang in there?"

As he was thinking, Taoist Mu Li's voice came from the outside. Fang Yuan then shook his head and was feeling irritated.

In the city master's mansion, the things used here were of top quality. There was Taoist Mu Li, who had found many reasons to visit Fang Yuan and even chatted with him about spiritual birds. He had shown great interest in the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and seemed that he was willing to give up anything in exchange for that eagle. This had caused Fang Yuan to be quite annoyed about it.

If not for his skills in feeding spiritual birds as well as his powerful Wood-type spiritual spells, which allowed Fang Yuan to learn quite a lot from him, Fang Yuan would have chased him away long ago.

"It's Taoist Leader Mu Li!"

Hence, Fang Yuan didn't want to do anything bad to him and instead, he welcomed him with a smile and said, "Are you going to discuss with me about spiritual birds today?"

"Not really! I have another issue to tell you today!!"

His face was quite serious. "There is news from the front line of the battlefield. Leader Xiang Zilong had led his troops to remove the remaining rebellion forces. There is finally peace in the Secluded Mountains Prefecture!"

"This is great news!"

Fang Yuan cheered but he was not really surprised by it.

The leaders and martial artists who had elemental force from the rebel forces were all killed already. The remaining rebellion forces

were definitely low skilled and easy to be removed. Hence, Fang Yuan had expected a victory in the war.

"Not bad, Brother Liu is probably calling all of us to go over for the rewards!"

Taoist Mu Li laughed and said, "Since Master Fang, you had contributed the most, I bet the city master would agree to it even if you want a county as a reward....."

"Well.....this is unnecessary. I'm living alone freely and separated from the rest of the world. I also don't have many close friends who need to be taken care of..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and found another flaw from Taoist Mu Li.

He was too ignorant about the politics! Or maybe, he was too naive!

'This rebel was a lesson to all and how could Liu Yan allow his power to be seized by the local leaders? Also.....the Spirit Returning Sect, the Bone Melting Sect and the Yellow Brothers Sect were all exterminated. The evil that was in the 3 counties was swept away. The Five Ghosts Sect from Lieyang County had disbanded and the other 2 counties were already controlled by Liu Yan. If he didn't want to rely on territories that he had to build up his name and power, then what was he waiting for? Liu Yan was likely to abandon the sects and factions to change the legislature of the counties.'

'If I was to ask for my reward now, I could really get a county, but I will have to worry about being regarded as a trouble to Liu Yan in future! I would rather not ask for such reward and be free from any problems!'

Of course, he knew that there was going to be a huge debate on whether to centralise or decentralise the counties. Fang Yuan wouldn't want to be involved in the debate and hence chose to sit

on the fence.

Too bad, he already had Qingye City and there was no way he could return it back.

....

"We have seen you before, city master!"

In the main hall, Fang Yuan and Taoist Mu Li greeted the city master.

Power was man's best medicine. Liu Yan had much power in his hands right now. He was feeling very comfortable and looked energetic.

"Haha! You two came here just in time!"

Liu Yan waved his hand and two soldiers came up. They then lay out a map of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture on the floor.

"I was able to kill Lu Renjia with both of your help. Brother Fang, you had contributed the most and I should share parts of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture with you two.

He said with much pride, "You two can circle the parts that you like and I will agree to it!"

Taoist Mu Li then swallowed. He was a little startled to see that he could get any parts of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture from the big map which was laying in front of him.

At least, he knew the limit of his capabilities. He was just a supporting role in this war and had no part in the attack. Plus, his contributions was not as much as Fang Yuan and hence he kept silent. He then looked at Fang Yuan.

"Hehe.....I have only contributed a little to this war and dare not to ask for any reward! After all, I'm living alone and have no intention of opening a sect or a faction of my own..."

Fang Yuan waved his hands and continued, "If you allow me, I hope to just have Lu Renjia's book of alchemy master, a few pieces

of advice from you regarding spiritual knight and your help to get me a few seeds of a few spiritual objects as rewards and I would be very grateful!"

"The rewards you are asking are too less! Too less! How can these rewards be compared to the number of contributions you had made?"

Liu Yan shook his head.

However, Fang Yuan who had extraordinary magical energy was able to capture that slight happiness Liu Yan had in his heart. Fang Yuan disapproved of it in his heart but showed a very sincere look. "Please listen to me, city master. Because of Lu Renjia's actions, the whole of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture had undergone an irreversible change and the pieces of land here had been overly separated. The sects and the factions were having a hard time to take control of their own territories and hence we cannot separate these lands again!"

"Hmm.....what you said is true..."

Liu Yan was happy and continued, "I have intentions of removing the sects' control in these pieces of land. I will order my men to control these counties and these counties will now be under my jurisdiction. How you two think about this?"

Only now, Liu Yan then revealed his true intentions.

"Great decision!"

Fang Yuan was feeling a little annoyed but he still nodded his head in agreement.

"This decision.....seems not bad!"

Taoist Mu Li nodded his head and seemed a little depressed.

"Haha.....very well!"

Liu Yan laughed and was very cheerful. "Taoist Leader Mu Li, I will give you the piece of land that is within 100-miles radius of the

Wood Elemental Temple as an asset and can be passed on to the future generation. You will not have to pay any taxes for that piece of land!"

"As for Brother Fang, I will give you what you have asked but I still think is too little!"

Liu Yan got up and walked a few steps. "You can recommend who to be the next governor of the Qinghe County. Also, there are also 10 acres of spiritual land from the Spirit Returning Sect and you can have those as well! How is it?"

"Thank you, city master for agreeing to my request!"

Fang Yuan immediately gave thanks.

"Haha.....I have a small gift for you as well. Brother Fang, you will understand what I mean once you are back in your room!"

Liu Yan laughed and said but he sounded as if he was joking.

"Hmm?"

Fang Yuan was a little confused. When he went back to his room, he then understood what Liu Yan had meant. He couldn't help but laugh as he saw Ling Yin lying down on a couch. He was speechless. "What is going on?"

"Sir!"

A housekeeper who was beside him laughed heartily and replied, "The city master said that since she is your prisoner, you shall decide how to handle her!"

"Okay, I understand. You can leave now!"

Fang Yuan was speechless and waved his hand to signal the housekeeper to leave the room. He looked at Ling Yin who was pale but pretty and couldn't help but to laugh. "Now I have one more issue to settle!"

Logically speaking, since Fang Yuan had killed her master, it is normal for him to kill her as well.

It seemed that Liu Yan had wanted Fang Yuan to kill her instead of doing it himself.

'This Secluded Mountain Prefecture City Master.....one can go through hard times together with him but one cannot share the good stuff with him...'

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and recalled when he first met Liu Yan. He came to a conclusion in his heart.

"The desire of man is infinite. Previously, Liu Yan only was respectable and only had one mission, which was to remove the rebellion forces initiated by Lu Renjia. However, now when the war is over, he immediately wants to centralize the whole of Secluded Mountain Prefecture and have the whole place under his control. After he has gotten the full control of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, will he be eyeing for the other two prefectures in the country and rule the whole of Xia Country?"

"He should just leave! Just leave! After he has gotten what he wanted, he should just leave!"

Recalling what he had just seen, Fang Yuan then made a decision.

He then went forward and checked on Ling Yin. He then realised she was just unconscious and not seriously injured. She just looked weak.

"Should I kill her?"

Fang Yuan stroked his chin and shook his head. "I'm not in a hurry to do that. Also....after Lu Renjia was killed, she would have a lot of secrets. Liu Yan may not be able to get her to spill these secrets out, but for me, I can use her as a target to practice the skill of dream accessing and dream building....."

As a dream master, he was an expert in getting intelligence from others. Even though Liu Yan might have thought that Ling Yin was of no use now, Fang Yuan was able to find some sort of use from her.

Chapter 125: The Meet

"Master Fang, please take care and remember to visit in the future..."

Outside the airspace of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture and high up in the sky, Daoist Mu Li rode on Wind Chasing Falcon as he reluctantly watched Fang Yuan prepare to take his leave.

The way Daoist Mu Li watched Fang Yuan caused his goosebumps to rise.

However, he knew that Daoist Mu Li was not a bad person and he was even slightly adorable to some extent. Fang Yuan waved his hand and said, "You do not have to send me off further...Before I leave, I would like to tell you that even though this place is excellent, it still cannot be compared to your home. Return to the Dao journey as soon as possible and enjoy the rest of your life!"

Right after he finished his sentence, Fang Yuan nudged Iron-tailed Black Eagle into flight without caring whether Daoist Mu Li understood his parting words. In no time they became a small black dot in the sky.

"Even though this place is excellent, it still cannot be compared to home...What a great saying!"

Daoist Mu Li nudged Wind Chasing Falcon to circle around the area as he muttered these words. Then he smiled bitterly and sighed, "Haiz...you can easily leave this chaos, but I am stuck here for long!"

...

"Whoo whoo!"

High up in the sky in the strong winds, Fang Yuan felt extremely delighted and shouted out in jubilation.

After all, whatever he took back this time was more than enough.

He did not have much intention to control Qinghe County. Based on what he had, it was already slightly challenging to control Qingye town, what more a county?

He was even more disinterested in setting up his own sect.

This time, not only did he take control of Qingye City, he could also nominate the governor. This was already a delightful surprise.

"Most spiritual knights in Xia Country, and even the neighbouring countries, are stuck at the Elemental Gathering Realm and cannot progress further... After 200 years of hard work, Liu Yan is now close to the next realm... Fusing elemental force and purifying it, the next stage would be to break through to the Elemental Opening Realm! To use one's elemental force and break through all the hidden locks in the body, one will be able to control his body like how an arm controls its fingers, unveiling the human body's true potential!"

As he thought about these, Fang Yuan grew increasingly solemn as he thought, "What a pity...Spiritual knights who have reached the Elemental Opening Realm are no longer around. What is left are some information about them in the incomplete inheritances and manuals!"

It was very obvious that if Liu Yan really reached the Elemental Opening Realm, he was the top martial artist in the country. He was even the top spiritual knight.

"Only that...is it even that easy to break through to this level?"

Fang Yuan was very doubtful about this.

There were few highly skilled spiritual knights like Liu Yan in each country who had completed consolidating their elemental force and were very close to advancing to the next stage. But it seemed like nobody had managed to break through, making it seem extremely difficult.

It was obvious that with Liu Yan's advancement and desire to

break through to the next level, people around were increasingly worried.

It might even be possible that the unrest created this time was by some people who did not wish to have a spiritual knight who was in complete mastery of elemental force to disrupt the balance of power in the country.

As such, even though Liu Yan looked like he was firmly in control, he was definitely very troubled internally, especially with the problems he was facing emotionally which was the most critical.

"But... what does all this got to do with me?"

Fang Yuan broke into a smile as he thought, "Who cares what goes on outside? I will just take advantage of this peace before the storm to stay in Qingye City to grow my crops..."

"Once I am able to successfully break through to the Dream-building and Illusionary Divine stages, I can still return and reclaim this old piece of land!"

After becoming a dream master, with the inheritance from Master Wenxin, he would be able to cultivate smoothly all the way to the Prominent Divine stage!

Of course, the dream master's Prominent Divine stage was divided further into many sub-stages. Even attaining the most elementary sub-stage would give one the power to rule an entire country!

"After all, the way of the dream master is to make sufficient preparations before acting. The longer I train the more powerful I become, I might even be on par with a spiritual array master!"

"Generally speaking, the Dream-accessing and Dream-building Stages of a dream master can be compared to the Elemental Gathering Stage of a spiritual knight. The Illusionary Divine Stage would be comparable to the Elemental Opening Stage. As for the

peak of the Prominent Divine Stage and even the stage of actualising an entire spiritual land, these stages must be much higher than the Elemental Opening stage. As for how to attain it, I have no idea too..."

"Dream-building, followed by Illusionary Divine stage, and subsequently the branching out of a dream master. This is the direction I should be heading towards in the future!"

As he was deep in thought, Iron-tailed Black Eagle suddenly let out a loud call of jubilation.

Fang Yuan was shaken out of his deep thoughts and he saw the Clear Spirit Mountain in sight as well as an extremely familiar looking city.

"Qingye City?!"

He patted the eagle's neck and it landed.

"Whoo whoo!"

In the midst of the strong downwash and the sight of the intimidating and powerful Iron-tailed Black Eagle, the peace within the city crumbled momentarily into panic.

"Sir is here!"

Then, a group of riders rode towards Fang Yuan. Its leader was Zhou Wenwu. He bowed and said, "Hello sir!"

"Erm, it looks like you're doing well as the head of this city!"

Fang Yuan looked at the guards following behind Zhou Wenwu and burst out into laughter.

In truth, these guards were very fortunate.

When Fang Yuan ordered Zhou Wenwu to take down Qingye City, he had no intention of creating a diversion for himself. If Lu Renjia had not ordered Blood Demon and company to retreat, these guards would probably be in great suffering.

Of course, the risk that Zhou Wenwu took earlier paid off.

At least, with the support of Fang Yuan and the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, Zhou Wenwu was able to consolidate his power as head of Qingye City smoothly.

"Sir, all remnants of the Spirit Returning Sect have been cleared out of the city!"

While walking towards the renovated and revamped official residence, Zhou Wenwu ordered the servants to leave them as Yu Xinlou and him reported the latest news in the city to Fang Yuan.

The last time Fang Yuan came to this place he did so furtively on his kidnapping mission. Now he could stride in proudly as the owner of the place.

"They've been cleared out? Outstanding!"

Fang Yuan dropped Ling Yin and ordered Yu Xinlou to make preparations as he lifted up her forehead.

He then remembered, the head of the Spirit Returning Sect in his custody was another problem for him.

Upon seeing this, Zhou Wenwu spoke up again and said, "The head of the Lin family, Lin Benchu and all 72 of his family members have been locked up. We are waiting for your orders!"

"Oh? Lin Benchu is also detained?"

Fang Yuan was slightly surprised by this news. To Fang Yuan, he could not decide whether Lin Benchu was a sadistic person or he was just plain cold-blooded. It was thus a surprise that this major obstacle was removed so quickly.

"Also..."

Zhou Wenwu then began to flush with awkwardness as he reported, "Lin Leiyu has also been detained. Would you like to see her?"

"Erm?"

Fang Yuan looked at him and asked, "You successfully detained a martial artist with inner force? Who helped you?"

"Sir, you're observant!"

Zhou Wenwu thought about the complicated history between Lin Leiyue and Fang Yuan and felt incredibly uneasy. Beads of perspiration formed on his forehead as he revealed, "Lady Lin was betrayed by her own people from the Spirit Returning Sect!"

"Tell me more in great detail..."

Fang Yuan picked up his cup of tea, his face was expressionless.

"This was what happened..."

Zhou Wenwu calmed himself down and reported everything he knew in great detail. What happened was actually very simple. When he took down Minister Lin's entire family, Lin Leiyue definitely came to their rescue.

When news of Liu Yan's victory arrived, the remaining fighting forces of the Spirit Returning Sect saw their morale completely broken and gave up. A few disciples and elders who were desperate for their own safety rebelled and betrayed Lin Leiyue, turning her in in hope they would be pardoned.

"Where is she?"

Fang Yuan thought in silence for a while before asking.

"She is currently locked up in an isolated cell alone in the prison. So are Lin Yuanwai and his family!"

Zhou Wenwu braced himself as he reported the decision he made for them.

In fact, if Zhou Wenwu did not consider Fang Yuan's dealings with the Lin family, he would have wiped out the whole family. He did not forget how they betrayed his family and took all of his family's property during the crisis in central Song.

"Let's go, after all we know each other, we still have to go over

and visit them!"

Fang Yuan stood up reluctantly and walked to the prison with Zhou Wenwu.

The prisoners were separated within the prison according to their statuses. For example, people of more respectable statuses were placed in the single cells as they naturally could not be treated as a normal criminal.

In fact, apart from the lack of freedom, the living conditions of the single cells were almost on par with those in the local inns.

After opening several metal gates, Zhou Wenwu led Fang Yuan to a cell.

Through the grills made of top quality metal, Fang Yuan saw the slender outline of Lin Leiyue.

Lin Leiyue lost significant weight in this short period of time. Her legs were chained by iron chains made of Thousand Years Cast Iron. Even if she recovered her strength, it would be impossible for her to escape.

"Brother Fang...no! Sir Fang, this is a misunderstanding!"

From the other side, Lin Yuanwai stuck his chubby head out and begged, "Please take into consideration our past friendship and spare our family!"

"Fang Yuan?"

The sound of her father's voice caused Lin Leiyue to come out of her thoughts and back to reality. She turned around to face the man in front of her with a complicated expression on her face.

She originally intended to take revenge on Fang Yuan, but she was easily defeated by his subordinate. She could not help but to admit that he had long overtaken her, to the extent the survival of her entire family now depended on him. As for himself, Fang Yuan gained several personal items from this trip. Riding on the

strength of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, he acquired a bunch of precious spiritual items as well as Lu Renjia's alchemy manuals. He even received guidance from Liu Yan on how to become a spiritual knight.

Instead, it was the plot of spiritual crop belonging to the Spirit Returning Sect that failed to impress Fang Yuan.

"This world is mostly made up of spirituality and martial arts. Martial arts only exists because it plays a supportive role to spirituality. Although there are developments in martial arts in the Da Qian Empire, the development is however not seen here..."

Fang Yuan calculated the items he benefitted such as the guidance from Liu Yan, the advice and lessons he took out from Daoist Mu Li and Lu Renjia's alchemy book. After he all he had learnt and gained, Fang Yuan was rather clear about his future after he becomes a spiritual knight.

"After a normal spiritual disciple promotes to become a spiritual knight, it can all be classified as the realm for the consolidation of elemental force already!"

"Based on this aspect, it didn't matter if one was an alchemy master, spiritual knight, spiritual array master or even a dream master, it was the same. The phases of entering the dream world and constructing dreams are all a part of the realm for the consolidation of elemental force. For other aspects or other terms, they do not deviate too much from the original principle that is to consolidate one's elemental force while putting in consistent hard work and effort in doing so!"

Chapter 126: Stocktake

"Master... How do you want to deal with the Lin Family?"

Out of the cells, Zhou Wenwu bowed and asked.

"Whatever you wish to!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands and gave a vague reply to Zhou Wenwu. He did not care one bit about the Lin's Family future.

"Also... You don't need to worry about Qinghe County. The Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master has the intention to insert county soldiers there and send a governor there... I have the right to recommend the first governor!"

As he ended his sentence, he could see the desire in Zhou Wenwu's eyes, which died out after awhile.

After a while, he realised that Zhou Wenwu did not plead him to recommend him as the governor, and nodded his head. "You know your own limits, and that's good..."

"I know that I can only do so much. It took me a lot of effort to take care of Qingye City already, so I know cannot take up this challenging role..."

If he said that he had no desires for the role of governor, that would be lying. It was just untimely!

With Zhou Wenwu's self-confidence, if he was given 20 years to develop in Qingye City, he could naturally become the next governor.

"Mm... Qingye City is yours, and Yu Xinlou will be your assistant! Zhang Sheng will take care of the secluded valley..."

Fang Yuan planned for his subordinate's future. "Also... The spiritual farm in Spirit Returning Sect is ours now, so hurry and send some people to take it over from the city, and Huang Fu Renhe will be in charge of this!"

Without further ado, without eating the dinner which Zhou Wenwu painstakingly prepared, Fang Yuan called for the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and disappeared into the sky.

...

"Everything that happened on Earth is a miracle..."

High above the clouds, Fang Yuan looked down at the city and had a different feeling from before.

When he came to the city for the first time, never would he know that the entire city, together with the neighbouring mountains and rivers, would be his property.

He returned to the secluded valley and told the excited Huang Fu Renhe about the spiritual farm, and instructed Zhang Sheng to take care of the secluded valley. Without stopping, Fang Yuan brought the Flower Fox Ferret along and arrived at where they held Shi Yutong.

In the cave, a sleeping beauty was in deep sleep and appeared shrivelled and skinnier.

"Alright, enough of pretending, Sect Master Shi!"

Fang Yuan scoffed. "You think you can hide it from me?"

At that moment, the sleeping beauty opened her eyes and her face glowed.

Even though she was in such a state, she still had an elegant vibe.

"Master Fang still remembers me...."

Shi Yutong sighed, and in her voice a little hint of resentment.

"Why? Is the location not good enough? Or not enough staples?"

Fang Yuan jokingly enquired.

He used a secret dream master technique to seal up Shi Yutong's elemental force, and this seal was extremely hard to break open.

As of now, she was just a normal lady, and could no longer escape

the trap she once placed here herself.

If she did not rely on the staples and water provided, she would have died of hunger!

"I am already a prisoner, why would I dare to be presumptuous? That would be asking for more!"

Shi Yutong sighed again. "There is no moonlight or sunlight in the cave, so I felt a little lonely, please don't hold it against me!"

"Why not just come straight to the point. You want to hear about what happened outside?"

Fang Yuan had a cheeky smile. "Firstly... I can tell you that half a month have already passed!"

"Half a month?!"

Shi Yutong nodded her head and forced a smile. "I'm afraid that Qinghe County is now in war? Lu Renjia's disciple is captured, and his alliance member trapped. He will surely do something about it, and you have joined the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master's alliance?"

"Lu Renjia is dead, and there is no more Spirit Returning Sect..."

Fang Yuan sighed softly and observed Shi Yutong's expression.

"Lu Renjia... Dead?"

Her eyes were wide and she was in disbelief. "How is that possible? Master Lu has the protection of Tiancan and Dique and even recruited the Blood Demon. Including our three counties, he should be at the winning end!"

"Liu Yan's alliance and I ambushed him and took his life while he was deploying his people all around!"

Fang Yuan did not hide. "Based on logic... I thought that you would be more concern about Spirit Returning Sect..."

"When the nest is flipped, how will there be any uncracked eggs?"

To Fang Yuan's question, Shi Yutong shook her head. "Since Lu Renjia died in your hands, then Bone Melting Sect Sect Master and Yellow Brothers Sect Sect Master would be no better, and the addition of Spirit Returning Sect would not do much..."

Even though it was as such, she was still reflective. "I cannot face the grandmasters of Spirit Returning Sect after its destruction."

Her attitude shocked Fang Yuan.

He thought that she would grief over the destruction of her own Sect as a Sect Master.

He did not expect Shi Yutong to look defeated, but still able to hold her emotions.

"What is Master Fang's intention for me?"

Shi Yutong raised her head and looked at Fang Yuan.

"Since you are my enemy, our feud cannot be settled just by a smile. However, I will also not be unreasonable and kill you, because that would be undeserving to a Sect Master. I can only have you stay here for a while longer. After all, a living Wu Zong would have more value..."

Fang Yuan shrugged his shoulders and noticed the shuddering of Shi Yutong's delicate body.

Even though this was not the cruelest way possible, but to her, it was definitely not a good thing.

Especially looking at Fang Yuan's progress, if he reached the corresponding stage in his dream master cultivation, he could use her as practice. By then, she would have preferred a quick death.

"I will replenish your food and water. Of course, before that..."

Fang Yuan took a few steps forward and took out a few golden needles. "I will periodically come back to strengthen the seal on your body!"

"Master is indeed an amazing doctor. I can do absolutely nothing

with this seal on me..."

Shi Yutong forced a smile and appeared helpless. She did not resist but asked. "Other than the Main Treasures Vault in my Sect, I have another secret storage, and only I know about it. Are you interested?"

"Nope!"

Fang Yuan replied decisively, which almost made Shi Yutong choke.

...

"This lady...is cunning! She is still trying to turn things around even in a dire situation!"

As he approached Green Peak spiritual land, Fang Yuan touched his chin and there was a sinister look in his eyes. "If not for the high value of a Wu Zong test subject, I would have killed her straight away, as that would be most appropriate..."

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle chirped and entered the white fog, and the Green Peak appeared in front of Fang Yuan.

"Flower Fox Ferret... While I was outside, you were lazy huh... Did you listen to my instructions and feed them?"

Fang Yuan approached the peak of the cliff and saw that the Red-eyed White Bird's nest were all empty. There were a few small bird corpse, as though they were starved to death.

"Keke!"

The Flower Fox Ferret tried to explain. Its paws were pointing here and there, as though it was describing that there was not enough prey to hunt.

Fang Yuan could only shake his head in disappointment. He knew that asking a spiritual beast to be a nanny was a little too much, and it was only normal that this would happen.

He intentionally down to take a look at the Red-eyed White King bird.

Even though the king bird was skinny like a bag of bones, it still had a little breath left, and Fang Yuan smiled. "This spiritual bird has a strong will to live..."

Since the most important king bird was still alive, then a few baby bird's death would mean nothing.

Fang Yuan returned to his straw pavilion and started to account for his spiritual plants.

Firstly, it was the Vermilion fruit. It was still a tiny shoot and did not grow much, which made Fang Yuan speechless.

The Questioning Heart Tea was filled with leaves, and had a little emerald glow around the entire tree; it was brimming with life.

Of course, there was the extremely important Flame Jade Rice. All of them germinated and looked like tiny flames. They greedily sucked the ground of spiritual energy.

If not for the nutritious ground in Green Peak spiritual land, they might not even be able to grow here.

Up to this point, Fang Yuan was rather satisfied. The Flower Fox Ferret was not completely lazy, as it did take care of these spiritual plants.

"However... it seemed that none of it evolved any special traits, I was thinking too much..."

After one round around the farm, Fang Yuan looked at the condition of the Icy Fire Jialan and the other single trunked spiritual plants and did not find anything special, which made him a little disappointed.

"What about the Sickie Grass and the Serrated Flower?"

He had high expectations for these two plants and specially planted them separately from the others to give them enough

space to hunt for food.

"Keke!"

After a few steps, the Flower Fox Ferret seemed afraid and tried to explain that there was something scary that happened there.

"Eh?"

Fang Yuan became excited and walked even faster.

The Sickie Grass and Serrated Flower could hunt for their own prey, but the farm was empty with an occasional corpse lying around. These were the unlucky ones who were attracted here and ultimately offered their flesh as a sacrifice to become the fertilizer for these two spiritual plants.

"Wow..."

Seeing how the surrounding plants were greener than before, with plenty of wild fruits, Fang Yuan heaved a sigh of relief. "When did these two spiritual plants have the ability to nourish the farm?"

With the numerous fruits around, wild animals would be attracted here, like how a bait attracts fishes. Furthermore, they fed the animals until there were big enough before capturing them, and Fang Yuan was shocked as to how these spiritual plants would know such a concept.

"Wait for me here..."

Seeing how the Flower Fox Ferret was afraid to take another step forward, Fang Yuan instructed it to stay put as he used his Lightness skill and arrived at the original farm.

"Hu..."

As he looked far, it was a sight to behold.

Half of the hill was covered with a specific plant. This plant had a thick stem and silver leaves, and in the middle, brightly coloured flowers were blooming and from the flower there was a strong

fragrance. He could see a large amount of nectar from these flowers, which made him salivate.

"This is..."

Fang Yuan had enough magical energy to see the horror behind the beauty!

Beneath the Sickle Grass and Serrated Flower, there was a large number of flesh and bones decomposing to become fertilizer for these plants!

Chapter 127: Relocating

What lay under the thick bushes of vegetation and colourful flowers were in fact heaps of skeletons!

Considering that this patch of spiritual plants was just seeded not too long ago, the destruction it caused was unfathomable!

"Could it be due to this reason that caused Flower Fox Ferret to catch way fewer prey than before...that led to deaths of so many nestlings?"

Fang Yuan looked over the entire patch of vegetation and an idea popped up.

"Caw caw!"

At this instant, a small grey sparrow appeared in the sky and circled above the vegetation. It was obviously attracted to the strong scent of the nectar, but it was also wary and hence undecided on its next move.

"It's you then!"

A spark glistened in Fang Yuan's eyes as he picked up a small rock and flicked it at the sparrow.

"Shoo!"

As the rock shot through the eye, the sound of the rock breaking through the air resistance at blistering speed was deafening. There was flash of spark and the sparrow let out a painful shriek before falling to the ground.

With Fang Yuan's current powers, the rock he flicked was almost as powerful as an arrow released from a bow, killing the sparrow instantly.

"Shoo!"

As the sparrow dropped towards the ground, the sickle grass on the ground reacted instantly. A large and thick blade of grass with

a metal gloss on it swiped through the swallow, slicing it into two as blood splattered on the ground.

"The speed and power of it..."

Fang Yuan widened his eyes in shock and thought, "I'm afraid this might even be as powerful as the swordsmen from the desert!"

"Snap!"

A more shocking incident happened in front of Fang Yuan again.

The plants on the ground violently scrambled together. The jagged edges of the leaves and flowers were like razor-sharp teeth and half of the sparrow's carcass was swallowed into the mess of plants.

"Crunch crunch!"

By the side, countless rays of light bounced off the smooth and sharp blades of the grass. What was left of the sparrow's corpse turned into a pool of blood spread evenly over a nearby patch of sickle grass.

"Is it normal for Sickle Grass and Serrated Flowers to be this brutal?"

Fang Yuan widened his eyes as he thought, "They must have evolved! Furthermore..."

He spotted a few pieces of dried and decomposing flowers and leaves by the side of the patch of Sickle Grass. He thought in awe, "The newly grown spiritual plants even wiped out the common plants that were here before them and are using them as fertilisers now...."

This patch of spiritual plants had blood on their hands since their birth!

"But, I think that it is even better if these two types of spiritual plants are more aggressive and offensive. What I do not know is whether the old way of dealing with normal Sickle Grass and

Serrated Flower will work on these evolved spiritual plants."

Fang Yuan thought and jumped off the tree branch.

"Chomp chomp!"

Just as both his feet met the ground, the ground exploded open and a piece of thick and thorny root spiralled towards him with amazing speed!

"Even the roots of the plants are also weapons, this is a new capability for these two spiritual plants."

Fang Yuan grabbed onto the root with his right hand and instantly felt the pain shoot through his palm. He winced slightly and thought, "If a common martial artist were to grab this like I did, his skin would be penetrated, and his blood would be sucked through the roots...the thorns on this root might even be poisoned..."

Of course, he was not any common martial artist.

As a Wu Zong who has completely mastered the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique, his body was incredibly tough.

"Get out!"

Fang Yuan broke out in a loud laughter and tapped the ground lightly with his toes. He immediately flew backwards in a flash.

"Pooh!"

From the bed of flowers, there was a violent disturbance as Fang Yuan plucked out a Serrated Flower with its roots intact from the soil. It let out a beastly roar as Fang Yuan did so.

Furthermore, the loose strands of roots brought along a few shards of Sickie Grass as the plants flew towards Fang Yuan.

"Crunch crunch!"

Several black rays of light bounced off the razor-sharp blades of grass.

The blades of Sickie Grass spun rapidly in mid-air like cutter-wheels as they flew towards Fang Yuan.

"Hmm?"

Fang Yuan's palm changed into a colour like that of enhanced steel. He flicked out a few rocks rapidly. Each rock avoided the sharp ends of the grass blades and accurately hit them in the centre.

"Pah pah!"

Several blades of Sickie Grass were cut through the centre by the rocks flicked out by Fang Yuan. Green liquid flowed out of the cuts made by Fang Yuan's rocks.

"Goo jee!"

Sensing the immense threat, the Serrated Flower opened and closed its large mouth and squirted out a jet of nectar. The scent of the nectar was incredibly alluring and confounding.

Fang Yuan dodged the nectar and it landed on the ground. The nectar instantly caused several small holes to open up in the ground and thick white smoke billowed from them.

"What a surprising move!"

Slightly surprised, Fang Yuan grabbed onto the roots and brought the Serrated Flower out of the plot of vegetation onto a piece of green rock.

"Goo jee goo jee!"

It was only here, did the spiritual plant finally quietened and calmed down. However, the roots continued to struggle and crawl about, as though it was looking for soil.

"This is...so great!"

This sight made it difficult for Fang Yuan to even mask his delight.

In the past moment, movement and change was so rapid and sudden. There was no difference between this and a duel between two martial artists, especially with the lethal instincts of the two evolved spiritual plants.

"These two are only the spiritual plants at the outermost of the plot of land..."

As Fang Yuan gazed at the Serrated Flower which was the size of a basin, he immediately thought what it was like in the centre of the plot of the spiritual vegetation. The Serrated Flowers in the centre were definitely like grinding plates. Even if a wild bull were to charge in, it would also be dismembered and devoured!

"It would be sufficient to use them to protect the spiritual lands!"

He lit a lighter and walked to the front of the Sickie Grass.

"Pooh!"

In a flash, the black blade of grass slashed the lighter into two and cut the back of Fang Yuan's hand, leaving a clear white scar.

"It is not even afraid of its old nemesis...It appears it is more difficult to control it than before!"

Before these two spiritual plants evolved, they had a common nemesis, which is fire!

In fact, most plants were commonly afraid of fire.

But what the Sickie Grass just did in the face of fire gave Fang Yuan a little surprise, which turned into worry.

"The roots are mobile and can move on its own. But to move it and then use it in a new location might be troublesome!"

Fang Yuan watched the plant on the rock wriggle its way out of it back onto the soil and then make its way back to its original position in awe.

The spiritual plants at this moment exhibited traits of animals.

This alarmed Fang Yuan. If he allowed them to continue growing, they might evolve to become uncontrollable and incredibly destructive.

However, remembering the folk tales he heard, he remembered hearing about tree elves in the West and Flower Spirits in the East. It did not seem that surprising for plants to develop spiritual intelligence after all.

"Furthermore...It is a good thing they have independent thought!"

A spark glistened in Fang Yuan's eyes suddenly.

The most important part of a dream master's journey was to align oneself with nature as much as possible!

This was all because of the most basic ability to enter the dream world!

Every item had a soul! Every grass or tree, flower or rock, or even the highest mountains were similar in having a soul and independent thought!

What was different for them was it took a long time, maybe even centuries for them to formulate a thought. If a dream master were to enter the dream suddenly, he would definitely work himself to death!

But what happens after reaching the highest level?

If one were to access the dreams of the entire world, would the constructs and rules of the world be laid out for the dream master to see?

Even now, it had unique effects!

"My dream-accessing technique is still unable to have any effect on plants. However, the Sickly Grass and Serrated Flowers can already express rage, fear and other emotions like wild animals... Furthermore, their minds are purer than that of wild

animals, which is the best state for me to influence them..."

Fang Yuan rose and looked towards the plot of spiritual plants as thoughts raced through his mind.

...

"Keke!"

After a period of time, Flower Fox Ferret which was on guard along the perimeter sprang into full alert and shot next to a big tree. Its eyes were filled with shock and panic.

In front of it, the plot of deadly vegetation was bustling with activity.

"Pooh pooh!"

Several roots broke through the ground and reached outwards like human limbs. Bringing many stalks of Sickie Grass with them, it began its great migration.

The whole plot of spiritual plants began shifting away. The sight was incredibly abnormal and freaky enough to freeze a person in fear.

The slope which the spiritual plants once occupied was not bare apart from Fang Yuan who sat cross legged on it. He was using magical energy to control the movements of the spiritual plants.

"My access into the dream world this time is more successful than expected!"

He was filled with delight as he thought, "Surprisingly, there was only one stalk of Serrated Flower which evolved. The other flowers grew from the pollen of the original stalk and are thus linked to it. I just have to control this particular flower and the rest would follow also. The sickie grass is just growing on the nutrients from the Serrated Flowers!"

The dream world of plants was incredibly pure and simple. With just a few interactions, Fang Yuan felt that the plants already

formed a close relationship with him and was beginning to rely on him. He could influence their movement with just his mind.

"After all they are just plants...it seems that they have yet to develop a sense of identity!"

Fang Yuan looked at the bare hill and immediately demanded, ""Spring breeze rain, strike!"

"Whoo whoo!"

The clouds billowed and coalesced into a heavy rain cloud before falling on the hill heavily.

This was a wood-type spiritual spell which was excellent at growing and maintaining the soil for plants to thrive on. He learnt this from Daoist Mu Li.

However, spiritual spells were incredibly challenging, and Fang Yuan had yet to master them despite several attempts.

However, when Fang Yuan entered the dream world of the Serrated Flower, he felt that his understanding of the botany world deepened immensely, which allowed him to overcome the parts of using spiritual spells he once found difficult.

"This ability to aid the growth of the plants is simply..."

Even though the Beneficial Downpour Technique was elementary enough for a spiritual disciple to execute, Daoist Mu Li said that he took one year to master it, and yet Fang Yuan took only a moment!

This difference was unexplainable!

"To cultivate within a dream is to steal essence from heaven and earth, by benefitting from all three worlds... Unbelievable! Unbelievable!"

Fang Yuan gasped in awe repeatedly. He was now clear why dream masters were at the highest end of the pyramid in the Da Qian Empire.

Even without fighting powers, dream masters were still able to

consolidate extremely solid foundations with such powerful aid which was something very few others could accomplish.

"Let's go!"

Fang Yuan rose and brought Flower Fox Ferret out of the Green Peak Spiritual Land, but he was still within the shield of the Bewildering Fog.

"Sha sha!"

Several stalks of Serrated Flowers and Sickle Grass shifted, and according to his plan, they rooted themselves down at selected positions and formed a new layer of protection.

"It seems like if a Wu Zong tries to trespass, he would first be disconcerted by the Bewildering Fog and then attacked by spiritual plants. These are enough obstacles to hold him off. Normal martial artists who try to trespass will just become fertilisers for the spiritual plants..."

Fang Yuan nodded in satisfaction. His Green Peak Spiritual Land was further secured.

Chapter 128: Disciple

After grafting the Sickie Grass and Serrated Flower, Fang Yuan realised that these two spiritual plants had a special property, which was extreme growth!

He casually sowed the seeds at the beginning, only to return to a vast field of flowers and grass! These two spiritual plants were planted not long ago and were extremely hardy. If there was prey, they would consume it, but if there was no prey, they could stay in ambush and receive nutrients like normal plants, from the soil.

With enough blood and flesh, the Green Peak spiritual land's defence would be completely set-up.

"A normal martial artist would find it impossible to break through the two-layered defence of the Ecstasy Fog and the spiritual plants, and if a Wu Zong was not careful he might also get trapped... If there was good coordination, together with the ambush of these two spiritual beasts, they could severely injure a Wu Zong! This defence is sufficient for now!"

On the peak of the mountain, Fang Yuan brewed a pot of Questioning Heart Tea and enjoyed it with the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and the Flower Fox Ferret.

Since the demise of Lu Renjia, he returned to the Green Peak spiritual land and lived in seclusion.

Every day consisted of farming, planting and researching the ways of a dream master. Occasionally he would leave to settle minute stuff in the outside world, and time passed very quickly like this.

In the blink of an eye, months flew by.

"Good! This spiritual land is indeed extraordinary!"

In the farm which planted the Flame Jade Rice, Fang Yuan already began to harvest the rice grains, and his face was full of

joy. "Together with the spiritual fertilizer, the period for it to mature has become even shorter..."

Based on the astonishing intake of nutrients by the Flame Jade Rice, the consequence of planting it at the secluded valley was that the land would become barren and the rest of the spiritual plants there would wither.

This consideration was thrown aside in the spiritual land.

"After this season's harvest, there would be enough for consumption. I have already begun to grow tired of the usual Vermilion Jade Rice, and it's good to change once in awhile..."

With expectations, Fang Yuan rode on the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and flew out of Green Peak spiritual land.

After all, he was no longer alone. When there were issues to settle in the outside world, his subordinates did not dare to make the bigger decisions without his approval.

Of course, there were not many of such decisions that needed his approval, but this time, it was rather important.

"Although the governor of Qinghe County might not be as influential and powerful as the previous Spirit Returning Sect Sect Master, he must also not be an ordinary person. There are many who want to wield this power..."

Since the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master wanted to appoint Fang Yuan as the governor, Fang Yuan did not want it. However, he soon realised that none of his subordinates was up for the job unless he decided to step up.

"The truth is... Shi Yutong is a good choice if she becomes loyal and obedient... What a pity that I can't trust her anymore!"

That thought ran past his mind as he flew in the sky. The Iron-tailed Black Eagle begun to descend into Qingye City.

"Master!"

A few subordinates gathered in the city square, and even Huang Fu Renhe and Zhang Sheng rushed towards him as well.

"Please rise!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands, arrived at the main hall and sat down.

"Huang Fu Renhe, how's the spiritual land in the Spirit Returning Sect?"

As he asked, Huang Fu Renhe bowed and replied. "To reply Master, I have smoothly taken over the 10 acres of spiritual farm. All have been accounted for. I have received 587 stones of spiritual grains, and as for the spiritual flowers and spiritual grass..."

"Mm?"

Fang Yuan twitched his eyebrows.

It was not that Huang Fu Renhe did a bad job, but that it was a very smooth transition.

Even with the backing of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master, Huang Fu Renhe could single-handedly under the scrutiny of many take over the entire farm, which surprised Fang Yuan.

'I initially wanted to use this chance to show my power and destroy those that would disobey... It seems that the families in the county are rather smart!'

Fang Yuan enquired. "Did you encounter any difficulties in the process?"

"There are bound to be difficulties, but with the support of the Chen Family in the county, everything was rather smooth and I fulfilled Master's instructions!"

Huang Fu Renhe replied respectfully.

The young man who recruited him was now a whole lot different from him, which resulted in the change of attitude from Huang Fu Renhe.

"Chen Family?"

Fang Yuan did not bother about these families, but the name was rather familiar.

Based on how he lived in seclusion and was still able to hear this name before, the Chen Family should be rather influential in the county.

"To reply master, the Chen Family is from Qinghe County. Their family master is Chen Qing, a renowned 8th Gate martial artist in the county. There are also rumours that he is just one step away from the 4 Heavenly Gates!"

Zhou Wenwu took a step forward and further explained. "When the news of the destruction of Spirit Returning Sect spread, this family was the first to switch sides and killed whoever in the family who were disciples of the Spirit Returning Sect. I've heard that three old people died and two other direct descendants too... After handing over a bloody list of names, they passed the checks from the Secluded Mountain Prefecture and were cleared. They are now the number one influential family in Qinghe County..."

"This Chen Qing is indeed cruel!"

Fang Yuan smiled.

Since they laid their foundations in Qinghe County, how could they not have relations with the Spirit Returning Sect? The cleansing of the family is not as simple as just killing a few people, but the innate mindset of the family members already.

Of course, the Chen Family's future is of no business with Fang Yuan.

"By doing this, the Chen Family must have a favour to ask for right?"

Fang Yuan looked at Huang Fu Renhe and smiled.

"Master, you are indeed spot on! Chen Qing has a son called Chen

Ziying, who wants to be your disciple. His son is no older than 20 years but is already an expert in inner force. He has extreme potential that I cannot match up against!"

Huang Fu Renhe was convinced by Chen Ziying and therefore tried to put in a good word for him.

"20 years old and already a 6th Gate martial artist, mm! Rather impressive!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

Even Lin Leiyue needed the help of a spiritual pill before breaking through the Pain Gate. The Chen Family surely did not have as many resources as the Spirit Returning Sect, which meant that Chen Ziying was indeed gifted!

Of course, Fang Yuan did not compare him to himself. If he really did so, all the talents in the entire country would be ashamed when they know of Fang Yuan.

"What a pity... I have no intention of having a disciple!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and sighed. "However... If the Chen Family just wants a status for him, I can give him the status of being my disciple. As for what I want to pass down to him, it is entirely up to me. Bring this message to the Chen Family for them to consider!"

Fang Yuan guessed that the Chen Family only wanted to scare others with his name, and therefore a disciple in-name would satisfy them.

As for a real disciple?

Chen Ziying was not qualified enough; even Lanruo was lacking a bit.

"Master is cultivating both martial arts and spiritual techniques at the same time and has already harnessed elemental force, so I guess the Chen Family would surely be willing to accept Master's

offer!"

Huang Fu Renhe could guess the intentions of the Chen Family and therefore replied instinctively.

"Mm, then so be it!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands and dismissed Hung Fu Renhe, and Yu Xinlou stood out. "Master... The White Cloud Business Council has been rebuilt, and the shops in the entire Qinghe County have been reclaimed. The Council is now on a larger scale than before, and is under your command!"

Yu Xinlou knew that his Business Council rode on Fang Yuan's influence in order to smoothly progress in the county, and therefore without hesitation showed loyalty to Fang Yuan.

"It's a good thing that trading is smooth in the county!"

Fang Yuan passed down a few instructions. He did not bother himself too much with these external power. However, it would still be a good thing if they could be developed, as he no longer had to travel vast distances to get what he wanted.

...

"Huang Fu Renhe, bring Lanruo and come around to the study!"

After settling the minute stuff, Fang Yuan instructed Huang Fu Renhe to follow him.

"Yes, Master!"

Although he didn't know the purpose of bringing Lanruo along, Huang Fu Renhe obliged politely and brought his sister to the City Master's study.

This study was huge, and the racks were filled with ancient books. There was a celadon vase on a wooden shelf and in it a plum blossom flower.

"Greetings, Master!"

Huang Fu Renhe greeted first and tugged Lanruo to do the same.

The little girl was a little afraid, bowed and her voice was filled with fear. "Greetings, Master..." Her voice was as soft as an ant.

"Haha! No need for formalities!"

Fang Yuan felt rather kind and amiable, as he examined Lanruo.

This girl once accompanied Huang Fu Renhe to scavenge for food and sleep on the streets, and therefore suffered quite a bit. After being taken care of for quite a while now, her figure became plump and there were baby fats on her cheeks, like a porcelain doll, extremely lovable. Fang Yuan could not hold back and pinched her cheeks.

'Not good!'

Huang Fu Renhe witnessed this and was torn in between.

'Could it be that Master likes Lanruo? She is still too young!'

'However, there are men who have these kinds of fetish... What should I do if Master is as such?'

Furthermore, thinking about how Fang Yuan was still a youth who was single, it sort of confirmed his possibility, and Huang Fu Renhe broke into cold sweat.

"Huang Hu Renhe... Do you know why the Wild Wolves Faction wanted to capture Lanruo previously?"

Of course, Fang Yuan didn't know what was going through Huang Fu Renhe's mind, but he could feel his uneasiness, and therefore softened his tone.

"I don't know..."

There was still the same conflict in his mind, and under confusion, he replied.

"Because Lanruo was born naturally with an above average magical energy! She is a good candidate for a spiritual knight!"

Fang Yuan smiled. "With her potential, she would be much stronger than you!"

"What?"

Huang Fu Renhe was shocked. Looking at Lanruo's eyes, he could not believe it. "Master, you are saying that... Lanruo can become a spiritual disciple?"

"If she works hard enough, she could even become a spiritual knight!"

Fang Yuan smiled and nodded his head as he looked at her. "Lanruo, are you willing to become my disciple and learn the art of alchemy?"

"Quickly agree! Kneel down and greet your master!"

Huang Fu Renhe immediately instructed Lanruo to do so. Only a fool would give this opportunity a miss.

"Master!"

The little lady was clueless but followed suit, as she kneeled down and greeted Fang Yuan.

"Mm, very well. In my hands, I have the entire collection of alchemy art from Lu Renjia. If you work hard, it would be possible for you to become an alchemy master in the future!"

Fang Yuan glanced at Huang Fu Renhe. "Renhe, you can learn as well!"

"Thank you, Sir!"

Huang Fu Renhe showed extreme gratitude and even changed the way he addressed Fang Yuan. It was as though he had sold his life to Fang Yuan, and pulled their relationship and loyalty another step closer.

Chapter 129: Matured

"Xiu! Xiu!"

The waving of the sword reflected flashes of light in the garden.

A teenager was holding onto a sword that was 3 feet long and he had a slender figure. He was practising his sword skills.

Even though he was young, his moves were fast and his tactics used seemed to be complicated. It seemed that he was well taught by someone else.

Whenever he drew his sword, there was a energy formed from the sword and he was also an expert in inner force!

All of a sudden, one could only see a flash of silver light in the flower garden and one would not be able to recognise that it was a person.

"Let there be breeze!"

He made another move with his sword diagonally and there was smoke produced. 9 petals then started to sway and split along the veins.

"Good sword skills!"

Fang Yuan came out of the corridor with Lanruo and praised the teenager.

"My family's martial arts is a joke to the experts!"

The teenager kept the sword and took a bow. "I'm Chen Ziying, Master!"

"Hmm, get up!"

Fang Yuan was smiling at the talented disciple who had come to Fang Yuan out of his will. "What kind of martial arts did you learn previously?"

"My family's Long Spring Technique and a few sword skills!"

Chen Ziyong replied with much respect.

"With your age, it is indeed rare to find one who could train to such a level..."

Even though Chen Ziyong was talented, he was not arrogant like any other normal talented ones and Fang Yuan like such character.

In fact, Chen Ziyong would probably have nothing to show off even if he had wanted to as Fang Yuan was young as him but was already a Wu Zong.

"Thank you for your praise, Master!"

Chen Ziyong took another bow.

"Hmm....."

Fang Yuan touched his chin and said, "Since now you are my disciple, I shall teach a few moves. However, your magical energy is not that great yet. If you manage to breakthrough for Wu Zong in future, there is a chance for you to become a spiritual knight. For now, I can only teach you a few martial arts moves!"

"I'm honoured to be your disciple and to be able to learn from you!"

Chen Ziyong replied with much respect and he recalled what his father had said to him.

'Even though the Chen family's strong will is displayed, but in the end, the family is too deeply involved and is not able to gain anyone's trust in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. Also, there are a few jealous ones who are trying to sabotage us. There is a saying that it is harder to make step forward than retreating. Hence, we will have to find a stronger ally who we can depend on and Master Fang is the most suitable person in the whole of Secluded Mountain Prefecture!'

'At least I'm now accepted as a disciple. Even if I'm accepted as a slave instead, so be it! The main priority is to be liked by Master

Fang!'

.....

As he thought about that, he was listening to what Fang Yuan said attentively.

"What I have learnt is not complicated. I will pass on the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique to you!"

Fang Yuan touched his chin.

With him pushing the peak limit in the dream world and a few adjustments he had made to his experiments for the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique, this technique was not like before. It was near to perfection and was way better. It also consisted of 13 grades and enabled one to break through the bottleneck of Wu Zong!

This newly edited technique was a secret martial arts technique and it was of the same level as the Spirit Returning Heart Manual.

'What a coincidence....there is so little knowledge about Wu Zong right here in the Xia Country but with the help of my dream world, I can practice and push the limit of Wu Zong. I will then be able to see for myself the state after Wu Zong.....'

Fang Yuan looked at Chen Ziying with a strange look. 'By teaching him the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique, not only it will help me to refresh my martial arts, I will be able to find out what is it like beyond Wu Zong.....A spiritual knight can fully master the elemental force. My martial arts should be of similar level to that in future.....I shall not visit the Da Qian Empire for now as it is better for me to fumble on my own first.'

"Thank you, Master!"

Chen Ziying didn't know what Fang Yuan was thinking and when he heard that the skill which was going to pass on to him was a good technique, he took a bow with satisfaction.

Fang Yuan silently approved Chen Ziying as he was not

overboard and not easily moved by honour.

"I have decided to recommend Niu Dingtian as the new county leader!"

Out of the blue, Fang Yuan suddenly mentioned this.

Not anyone could take up the position as the governor of the Qinghe County. If it was an outsider who took up the position, the outsider would still want the soldiers from the Secluded Mountain Prefecture to listen to his or her orders?

Also, even though Liu Yan had allowed him to choose who to be the next governor, Fang Yuan would have to take into consideration of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture's presence there. Hence, Fang Yuan had chosen Niu Dingtian whom the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was familiar with.

"Leader Niu is good at martial arts and is quite immersed in improving his martial arts. Hence, he will probably not have enough time to handle the county's matters. I am recommending Chen Qing from the Chen family to be his personal assistant!"

After Fang Yuan said that sentence, the teenager's eyes were already filled with tears.

"I will do anything in future to repay your kindness!"

Chen Ziying kowtowed and knew that this recommendation would be approved by the city master as it was recommended by Fang Yuan.

As such, the Chen family would have a position here in the county and hence achieving their goal.

'Even.....according to what Master had mentioned, Leader Niu is a rough martial artist. Isn't the Chen family is going to be known for handling the county's matter's as an assistant?'

As he thought about this, Chen Ziying was feeling passionate as he didn't expect his new master to treat him in such a nice way. He

was having the intentions of repaying this kindness till his death.

"Haha.....you are my disciple. If I don't consider for you, who else can I consider for?"

Fang Yuan was smiling widely. It was like a benevolent teacher showing kindness to his filial disciple. However, deep down in his heart, he was thinking, 'You said you would do anything to repay my kindness!'

No matter what, even though it was not entirely a bad thing to be so calculative towards his own disciple, it was not really a good thing still and hence he would have to make some sacrifice first.

As for Lanruo, Fang Yuan had the same concern for her.

Alchemy not only required an inheritance, it needed one's talent and lots of effort had to be put in.

Fang Yuan was already focusing on the pathway of Dream Master and how would he have the time to help Lanruo for Alchemy?

However, Lanruo was talented and she had her brother, Huang Fu Renhe by her side to help her. Hence, the both of them could focus on Alchemy without Fang Yuan's help.

If one of them could be an alchemy master in future, it would bring many benefits.

'Unknowingly, my power has risen to such a level.....'

As Fang Yuan thought of this, he was also shocked. 'I'm currently controlling a city but my power is still considered small in the Qinghe County. In future, when Lanruo and Chen Ziying have grown up and are able to make a breakthrough in the elemental force, won't I be qualified to rule the whole of Secluded Mountain Prefecture?'

.....

Anyway, it was a good thing for both Chen Ziying and Lanruo to have found Fang Yuan as their master and both of them can

depend on him.

The news of Fang Yuan accepting two disciples soon spread. Zhou Wenwu and a few of the others came and congratulated him. There were other big households from the city who came to congratulate him as well and even gave him gifts to show their loyalty.

Previously, when the method which Zhou Wenwu used to pressure the Lin family had scared the rest a little. Since there was a chance now, they would make great efforts for Fang Yuan.

However, Huang Fu Renhe soon realised that Fang Yuan had no talent in being a teacher.

Whether he was teaching Lanruo or Chen Ziyang, Fang Yuan taught them only the basics and it was up to the two of them to comprehend the rest. Sometimes, Fang Yuan just gave them manuals for them to study on their own.

Not many people could endure such 'self-learning' technique for a long period of time.

Luckily, both Chen Ziyang and Lanruo were talented and both of them often had many discussions about their research with Huang Fu Renhe. Through this brainstorming, they were barely able to keep up with the pace that had been set by Fang Yuan.

What about Qinghe County?

After Niu Dingtian was appointed as the county leader, he was indeed annoyed with the county matters and made all his assistants to handle the matters. Chen Qing was hence promoted and had some power. The Chen family became rich and even wrote many letters to Chen Ziyang, asking him to be a filial disciple towards Fang Yuan, in order to maintain his family's prosperity.

Even though Chen Ziyang had the intention to be well liked by Fang Yuan, Fang Yuan only taught a few days of lessons and was nowhere to be seen for the rest of the days. Fang Yuan was also not

back in the secluded valley often and this made Chen Ziyang disappointed in Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan was not showing much concern to the Chen family already.

In fact, ever since he found out that the seed of the Flame Jade Rice had matured, Fang Yuan had shifted his focus onto the spiritual farm.

Also, the Green Peak had an abundance of spiritual energy and it was good for one's cultivation. Fang Yuan couldn't bear to leave that place even when he was having a break.

"Haha...Flame Jade Rice has finally matured!"

In the farm, there were many flame-like spiritual plants grown. Hanging above were a few gigantic buds that were carrying the pill-like Flame Jade Rice.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

A few sparrows were still circling around in the sky even though some of them had been caught by the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"I didn't expect a matured farm to be able to attract so nearby animals and birds!"

Fang Yuan grabbed a rock and threw it into the sky.

"Whoosh!"

A few broken pieces of rock was shot into the sky like a flame and among the cries, big amount of feathers then came falling down.

"I'm afraid I will have to plant the seeds of the Sickle Grass and the Serrated Flower so that they can guard this farm in future."

Fang Yuan then leapt forward to the side of the spiritual farm. He stepped with his right foot and his foot was like an iron plough. The layer of soil was flipped open.

"Pa!"

A groundhog let out a cry. Its eyes were glittering under the sun and there was spiritual energy around it.

"Do you really want to continue digging?"

Fang Yuan kicked it away with his leg.

"Keke!"

There was a flash of white light appearing in mid-air and the light revealed Flower Fox Ferret which had landed on the ground. Its mouth was holding onto the groundhog and it started to feed on the groundhog.

Even though the Flower Fox Ferret's appetite had changed, it still couldn't resist the meat from another spiritual beast. It pinched its nose and ate the piece of meat raw.

"It is still too obvious to plant one acre of spiritual rice!"

After he had removed the pests, Fang Yuan had decided to increase his defences of the farm in future, or else he would incur a big loss. He then started to harvest the crops with the Flower Fox Ferret.

"If I have so much spiritual rice for me to eat every day, I don't mind living in the mountains here for the rest of my life."

Looking at the storage that was fully filled with food supplies and the two spiritual beasts which both gave a hopeful look, Fang Yuan then clapped his hands and said, "Very good, we shall eat to our hearts' content!"

Chapter 130: Dream Building

Fang Yuan was extremely experienced in cooking spiritual rice.

However, he did not know what to expect from the Flame Jade Rice. For instance, the heat had to be brought up to cook it.

If he did not prepare enough Flame Jade Rice, he was afraid he would undercook and waste the first pot of spiritual rice, which would be a joke!

"Hu!"

Once the spiritual rice became cooked, Fang Yuan lifted the pot cover, and an intense heatwave came out of the pot.

"Keke!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Flower Fox Ferret and Iron-tailed Black Eagle gathered around and stared at the cooked Flame Jade Rice.

In the pot, grains of spiritual rice were glowing red, and were of a much larger size than before, like a lychee. It was crystal clear, and there seemed to be a tiny flame in within.

"Why does this feel like I am making spiritual pills?"

In spending time guiding his disciple, he slowly understood Lu Renjia's alchemy techniques and felt that cooking this pot of spiritual rice was rather similar to making spiritual pills, and the end products of the two processes were rather similar as well.

'Of course... Spiritual rice is grown naturally and will, therefore, be better than a normal pill. Furthermore, it can be eaten as a staple, but for a pill, one still has to be worried if it is poisonous...'

He took out two grains of spiritual rice and distributed them to the Flower Fox Ferret and Iron-tailed Black Eagle. He then took one grain for himself and stuffed it in his mouth.

"Wu!"

This rice was crispy and fragrant. Needless to say, its taste was wonderful. More importantly, after unshelling the rice, it was as though a burning flame exploded in his mouth, through his throat and down to his stomach. His Dantian became warm, like a small fireball in it.

"Wonderful spiritual property!"

With such a strong replenishment of spiritual energy, it was easily many times more beneficial than the Vermilion Jade Rice, which made Fang Yuan's eyes glitter.

Even with his astonishing magical energy, he could still feel that the elemental force in his Dantian was being stimulated, becoming just a little stronger than before.

"This scale... It is much larger than the spiritual tea in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture..."

Fang Yuan touched his forehead and his hand became moist. He was beginning to sweat.

"If I consume this on a daily basis, it will train my fire element and cleanse my bone marrow! Furthermore..."

His eyes flashed and he gestured something with his hands.

"Chila!"

A small flame appeared at his fingertips.

"Fire-type spiritual spells... I've learnt it?"

Fang Yuan was extremely interested in spiritual spells. He had read up all about it in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture and took down mental notes of it.

Liu Yan was a fire-type spiritual knight himself. Although he did not teach his secret spiritual spells, he did not reject Fang Yuan's plea to learn a few basic spiritual spells used by spiritual disciples.

Spiritual spells were the hardest to learn, and as Fang Yuan tried to harness it, he encountered immense difficulties.

However, this time, with the stimulation of the spiritual spells, he felt that he understood fire-type cultivation even more, and he could even feel the fire-type force in the Heavens and Earth. It was a different path from dream accessing and harnessing wood-type spiritual spells, but the end goal was the same. All of them were equally profound.

"This Flame Jade Rice is fire-type. If I consume it for a long period, I would be able to increase my fire-type experience..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin and was in deep thought. "If Liu Yan knew about this, he would spend a fortune just to get his hands on these!"

He was already at the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm and was just one step from Elemental Breaking Realm.

However, this last step was arduous!

In order to get assistance to have even the slightest chance to break through, he would snatch or steal this Flame Jade Rice if he knew of its existence.

"Keke!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

While Fang Yuan was lost in his thoughts, he suddenly became aware and realised that the Flower Fox Ferret and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle had eaten half of the entire pot of Flame Jade Rice, and was a little frustrated. "Hmph... Both of you didn't leave anything for me!"

He joined them in the queue to snatch for more.

This Flame Jade Rice was extremely filling. Every grain was as big as a lychee, and he became full after eating 7 to 8 grains of it. Seeing the Flower Fox Ferret and Iron-tailed Black Eagle both

slowing down to slowing chew on it, he then remembered to slowly savour the taste of it.

"With my qualifications, if I focus on cultivating fire-type spiritual spells, I should be able to be on par with Liu Yan in less than 20 years!"

After the meal, Fang Yuan felt that he understood more about the Flame Jade Rice's benefits.

"Of course, by purely training as a spiritual knight would be too dumb and a waste of my gifts!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered. "With so much aid from all these spiritual objects, I don't believe that I cannot break through the bottleneck of a dream master!"

...

"Chirp! Chirp!"

On the peak of the Green Peak spiritual land, a large flock of Red-eyed White Birds were flying around, flapping their wings and chirping.

As the owners of this entire land, other than hunting, these birds were extremely free, and once in awhile would fly to the river, comb their feathers and play around, as though they enjoy it very much.

In this peaceful environment, a grey shadow took a shortcut and climbed up to the peak of the mountain.

"This Red-eyed White King Bird is about to starve to death, and yet it is still so strong-willed! How troublesome!"

This grey shadow was indeed Fang Yuan!

Without a doubt, this was the dream world of the Red-eyed White Bird.

It was a certain level to be able to awaken and become lucid in one's own dream world.

However, he was now able to become lucid in someone else's dream, which meant that he had attained a higher level in his journey as a dream master.

Furthermore, after a few reincarnations as birds and much experimenting, Fang Yuan was able to adopt a human body in the dream and therefore did not have to force himself to adapt to a bird's life anymore.

Otherwise, if he did this a few more times, he was afraid that he would pick up the habits of the birds and therefore affect his own lifestyle. For instance, the feeling of having wings, or the urge to fly once he was on a cliff.

"The Elemental Gathering Realm of a dream master is split into two parts. The first is dream accessing, and the second is dream building!"

A dream-accessing master can enter the dream of anything with a spirit. Editing the dream world and creating imagery would be for a dream-building master!

"When a person is dreaming, he would put his guard down. By building a similar scene to the person's dream, one would be able to steal secrets... This is the most basic use of dream building. Who could tell the difference between reality and imagery? The true essence of dream building is mashed-up memories!"

Fang Yuan approached the top of the cliff. He was already familiar with the terrain, as he aimed at the platform and jumped.

"Ping!"

After falling for a while, he landed on his feet first and did a somersault.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The sound attracted the attention of the Red-eyed White Birds, and a few white birds chirped and rushed towards him.

"Get lost!"

Fang Yuan struck his hands as claws and aimed at the birds.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

His ambush broke the skull of the Red-eyed White Birds, which fell to the ground. Fang Yuan continued to rush towards the king bird's nest cave.

Ultimately, this was the Red-eyed King Bird's dream and it was alert. Therefore, Fang Yuan's ability here was only that of a 4 Heavenly Gate martial artist.

But that was enough!

"The king bird is now out hunting and have yet to return. Of course, it would return shortly... This is because the eggs in its nest are about to hatch. It will need to rush back to let the chicks see it at first sight!"

Fang Yuan smiled.

Birds had a specific habit. The newborns will treat whoever they see first as their parents, and would become more intimate with them.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Outside, there was the shriek of birds. The Golden Crown King Bird had returned and realised something which made it very angry.

"Wait out there! Dream building!"

At this moment, Fang Yuan felt that he had increased control over this dream world, and started to affect the cave.

"Eagle Claw!"

"Rumble!"

As his claw struck, the opening of the cave crumbled and large rocks fell and covered the entrance of the cave. The Golden Crown

King Bird was frustrated but could do nothing.

"I want... light!"

Fang Yuan mumbled a few words and suddenly, the entire cave was lighted up by a warm light.

"Chh! Chh!"

At this moment, in the next, a few huge eggs started to wobble, and cracks appeared on the eggshells. Small beaks protruded and slowly pecked at the shell, forming small holes.

"That's right, keep it up!"

Fang Yuan approached the nest and observed.

"Kacha! Kacha!"

Accompanying the distinct cracking sounds, the eggshells cracked and revealed chicks with little to no feathers. There were still pink little chicks.

Seeing the baby chicks, no one could imagine that one of them would eventually go on to become a red-eyed white king bird.

"Chirp! Chirp! Chirp! Chirp!"

As the chicks opened their eyes, they carved an impression of Fang Yuan in their little minds.

"Good chicks!"

Not only that, Fang Yuan even stretched out his arm and stroked them one by one, making the chicks remember his breath.

...

In the cave, Fang Yuan opened his eyes.

At the same time, the Red-eyed White King Bird in front of him opened its eyes too. As it looked at Fang Yuan, it was weird. It did not have the fierce look it once had, but rather, a kind look.

"Good... here, have some food!"

Fang Yuan smiled and passed it a bamboo fruit and a few grains of Flame Jade Rice.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Red-eyed White King Bird chirped weakly and obediently opened its beak to eat the food.

"It's done!"

Seeing this scene, Fang Yuan was overjoyed. He knew that the Red-eyed White King Bird had fully accepted him.

'Who would've known that this attempt at changing its memories would be so successful. Luckily, I had prepared myself mentally for this...'

Although the dream world was different from memories, a lie repeated a thousand times would become the truth. As long as he continuously convinced it in its dream many times, the Red-eyed White King Bird would confuse its dream world with its memories.

Furthermore, this spiritual bird's mind was more innocent than that of a human, and it would be easier to work on it.

The only thing the Fang Yuan didn't expect was that he would succeed on the first try!

"Very good... This Red-eyed White King Bird has the capabilities of a 4 Heavenly Gate martial artist, and would even be on par with a 12th Gate martial artist when it is raged! Furthermore, it is a spiritual bird and has the ability to fly, and can also control the flock of red-eyed white birds. I have another strong aide now!"

Since he had tamed the Red-eyed White King Bird, Fang Yuan immediately released the chains on it and fed it with large amounts of spiritual food for it to recover.

"I have now entered the stage of a dream-building master, and just lack practice on a human's dream... I still cannot be considered experienced..."

Fang Yuan knew his own abilities well. Half a month after the first harvest of the Flame Jade Rice, his cultivation was improved quickly.

Chapter 131: Pathway

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 11

Spirit: 10.5

Magic: 9

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Dream-Building Master (High Elemental Gathering Stage)], Wu Zong

Technique: [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 13) (???)], Ecstasy Spell, Shadowstep

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 4)]"

"Dream-building Master - Not only you have access to any dream worlds, you are also an illusionary editor. You are the real dominator even when you are in other people's dream world!"

.....

"As I reached the stage of a dream-building master, I have also reached the high elemental gathering stage..."

As he looked at his stats window, Fang Yuan touched his chin.

He realised that the stats listed were based on his knowledge and comprehension.

For example, after Fang Yuan knew the difference between Elemental Gathering Realm and Elemental Breaking Realm, the stats for his cultivation had a big change.

"I'm afraid a normal spiritual knight needs at least 10 years in order for them to reach the high elemental gathering stage? I only spend a few months to get it....."

Fang Yuan realised that he was more suitable to become a dream master and his speed of breakthrough was also faster.

Plus, he only spent a few months to be on par with those who had spent at least 10 to 100 years of training.

Inside his mind palace, the dream elemental force was flowing in his mind like water and was very pure. If he were to improve a little more, he would probably be like Liu Yan and able to reach the threshold of the elemental breaking realm.

"Of course.....when becoming a dream master, one will not be at the elemental breaking realm straight away. There needs to be holy training as this involves turning illusion into reality!"

"However, if one wants to turn a dream world into reality, does one know that the rules of comprehension and the energy needed are scary? Hence, when training to become a dream master, one could choose different pathways to do it. To simply put it, one would not start with forming the whole dream world. One could start with a normal knife, a spiritual pill or a spiritual spell in the dream world. One could even start with just a normal rock.....If one could achieve this, one would be holy!"

"Even though the process of making such world involved one to start from small objects to big ones, the time needed was very long.....Some dream masters even got stuck at this stage for their whole life..."

A world, and even the smallest world in the universe did contain many scary rules?

Even though one would spend their whole life trying to make such a world, not many of them could become the actual dream masters who could produce such worlds. Many of them remained stuck at the holy illusionary stage.

"Also.....within that stage, there are different pathways for dream masters to go and hence there will be different specialisations!"

Fang Yuan recalled the content that he had inherited from

Master Wenxin and his eyes started to glitter. "For example, the simplest would be the study of dream worlds. Complementing with the techniques for dream-building, it would help a dream spell master produce spiritual spells. Also, having a soldier's fundamentals would help a dream soldier master, or maybe one could play a support role as a dream alchemy master, or a dream array master who would research on the heavens and earth. The most tedious one would be the spiritual beast master who can create live animals. The most mysterious one would be the dream divine master, who would be able to predict one's future and luck..."

Basically, the pathway of becoming a dream master covered all kinds of spiritual knights.

A dream master could achieve what a spiritual knight could achieve and even if there is something a spiritual knight couldn't achieve, it would not be hard for the dream master to achieve it, if not why would they be called the dominators of their full-time career?

"The difference between a dream master and both a spiritual alchemy master and spiritual array master will be that for dream masters, the raw materials that they get are produced by themselves from the dream world and hence the cost of it is very little. Their skills can be trained in the dream world and this is one of the advantages. Of course, the main point is that a dream master is able to comprehend the rules of heaven and earth during battles and training for alchemy and arrays! They are constantly improving the dream worlds that they are displaying!"

"All dream masters only wish for one thing, which is to display a dream world that is holy and big!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered and sighed while he shook his head. "Unfortunately.....I'm still quite a distance away from that stage!"

A dream spells master who was at his basic level could produce a

spiritual spell from the dream world and this was no different from a spiritual knight! What did this show? It meant that with one's imagination, one would be undefeatable with the confusion of illusion and reality.

Anyway, if one would want to reach this stage, one would have to make a breakthrough in the holy illusionary stage first and that would also be the elemental breaking realm for a spiritual knight!

Plus, it was more difficult for a dream master to make that breakthrough as compared to the spiritual knight.

If one wanted to display something from the dream world into the real world, even if it was just a small rock or a sand particle, it represented a supernatural power! Mind could affect matter and consciousness could affect reality!

"However, since this is more difficult, the benefits of breaking through the holy illusionary stage are greater. One would be at the top even if one was in Da Qian Empire....."

Fang Yuan sighed and waved his hand in the sky.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Red-eyed White king Bird landed and started to rub Fang Yuan's palm.

Ever since he had managed to tame this bird through dream-building, the bird had become closer to Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan even made the bird forgot about the revenge it previously had.

It was the expertise for a dream master to tamper with one's memories and create illusions.

"Have some more!"

Fang Yuan took out a big amount of Flame Jade Rice and Questioning Heart Tea for the bird to feed on.

The Flower Fox Ferret and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle were

feeling a little jealous with regards to the treatment the Red-eyed White King Bird had gotten.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Even though the Red-eyed White King Bird previously did not feed on spiritual rice and spiritual tea daily, it was still joyful and it quickly ate the spiritual food. Sometimes, it also used its beak to rubbed against Fang Yuan and this made both of them even closer.

'This Red-eyed White King Bird is special and its abilities is much higher than that of the Iron-tailed Black Eagle even without any prior spiritual food supplements. If now it is constantly being supplemented, there is a possibility that it can reach a higher level!'

This was the reason why Fang Yuan was treating the bird so well.

After all, to a spiritual knight who was in the elemental gathering realm, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was only used as a mean of transport. The eagle would not be useful in battles but what about another bird which had the elemental force?

Fang Yuan had more hope for the Red-eyed White King Bird which had the possibility of breaking through.

"Keke!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

That scene triggered both the Flower Fox Ferret and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle. Both of them came to Fang Yuan to show their abilities by bringing a few preys they had hunted.

"Haha....you two!"

Fang Yuan laughed and said, "Since the bird has fully recovered, the bird will take over the role of taking care of the rest of the Red-eyed White Birds. You two will not have to hunt for prey daily to feed the young birds....."

Even though through Fang Yuan's previous attacks, the Red-eyed

White Birds population had incurred quite a big loss. However, the Red-eyed White King Bird was still here. Along with the young birds and the eggs, plus Fang Yuan's spiritual objects for them, the bird population would develop quickly.

"As for you two.....you two shall follow me to the Prefecture Master's mansion!"

With regards to the fight between the spiritual beasts, Fang Yuan was quite surprised by it and of course, he would not forget this two even though he now had a new pet, which was the bird.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle lay facing down. It spread its wings to signal Fang Yuan to get up quickly. It then gave a stare to the Red-eyed White King Bird.

'What is this.....Big black. Where has your pride of being an eagle gone to?'

Fang Yuan was speechless and as he saw the unwilling look from the Red-eyed White King Bird, he couldn't help but laugh.

.....

"Master!"

In the Prefecture Master's mansion, everything was going smoothly. The only ones that still needed coaching would be Lanruo and Chen Ziyang.

"Hmm, Ziyang, your Eagle Claw is not bad now!"

Fang Yuan was surprised that in just a short period of time, Chen Ziyang had managed to break through the 4th Gate and could concentrate his inner power from the Eagle Claw.

Even though Chen Ziyang already had prior experience in martial arts and didn't have to pass through the initial stage, Fang Yuan didn't expect him to have practised the Eagle Claw Technique to such a level.

"I'm able to achieve this is because of your guidance and help of the spiritual rice!"

Chen Ziyang bowed with much sincerity.

After all, even though he was the son of the Chen family, he didn't have Vermillion Jade Rice for all meals daily.

In fact, it was because Fang Yuan had found a type of rice that was better than the Vermillion Jade Rice and hence he was willing to give out the Vermillion Jade Rice to his men and disciples.

If Chen Ziyang knew that what he had enjoyed was what Fang Yuan had abandoned, he would be shocked.

"Master....."

Since they had known each other for quite some time already, Lanruo was not shy when in front of Fang Yuan anymore. "I don't really understand some of the spell language and the techniques in the alchemy. For example, the Three Yang Fire and the Three Yin Fire, and also the Settling Jade Liquid and Rising Sun....."

"For these....you will have to wait. I have some matters to settle today. I will answer all your questions tomorrow!"

Fang Yuan was feeling a little ashamed but he didn't show it on his face. He waved his hand the two disciples to leave first and then he went to the prison.

In the prison, there was a cell that was rather clean and he saw Ling Yin in it.

"How are you, Miss Ling Yin?"

Fang Yuan greeted her and smiled at her.

Ling Yin was sitting down with her knees crossed and she opened her eyes slightly to take a glance at Fang Yuan. She then replied sorrowfully, "You can forget about getting any intelligence from me!"

"Miss Ling Yin, why are you rejecting me straight away?"

Fang Yuan unlocked the cell with a key and held onto her chin.

Ling Yin's whole body was trembling but she was not resisting, as she knew that it would be of no use since Fang Yuan was powerful than her.

"Since you are not willing to die, it means that you still have matters to settle. No matter what it is, whether is it with regards to revenge or repaying someone's kindness, as long as you are not willing to die, we will have room for discussion, isn't it?"

Fang Yuan seemed to be very confident.

"My master is already dead and you still want to know the secrets of alchemy? Dream on!"

Ling Yin's expression changed.

A real alchemy master couldn't be cultivated just by looking at manuals. One would need a senior's guidance as well to become an alchemy master. That was why Liu Yan was willing to give Lu Renjia's alchemy books to Fang Yuan.

Liu Yan didn't believe that Fang Yuan could cultivate an alchemy master on his own.

Chapter 132: Dream Stealing

"Dream?"

Fang Yuan smiled and showed a mysterious look.

This unpredictable attitude of his worried Ling Yin.

"That's alright..."

He smiled and was rather gentlemanly. "I initially wanted to trade with you, your knowledge in alchemy for your freedom... But since you are not willing, then..."

"Pa!"

Fang Yuan snapped his fingers.

"Whooo! Whooo!"

A layer of Ecstasy Fog appeared and covered Ling Yin.

"You..."

Ling Yin stared at him and said a word before falling asleep.

Even if her miniature elemental force was not sealed, she would still succumb to Fang Yuan's Ecstasy Spell, not to mention the state she was in now.

"My lady... Let's meet in your dream..."

Fang Yuan placed his palm on Ling Yin's forehead and initiated the dream accessing process.

...

It was daytime with a slight drizzle. A thick fog was all around.

In the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, within a large manor, Ling Yin stood up and yawned as she rubbed her eyes.

She had the look of a 12-year-old with two hair buns. She was in a pink robe and wore silk shoes, with two yellow flowers at the side. She was like a mini sculpture, adorable.

"This is... My home..."

Ling Yin was confused. "Why do I feel like I have forgotten something important..."

"Ling Yin!"

A voice travelled from the front of the manor, and Ling Yin threw all her thoughts aside. She stuck out her little tongue and said, "Oh no, I've woken up late today, will Master scold me?"

She ran all the way and arrived at the alchemy room.

In the middle of the alchemy room stood a large cauldron, and beneath it was Beast Charcoals burning. There was no smoke, only red flames, and anyone who stood near it would sweat profusely.

"You've missed the morning lesson, why are you so late today?"

Lu Renjia was wearing a brown robe in front of the cauldron, looking much younger than before.

"Don't be angry master... I... I was working late last night, and slept a little later than usual!"

Ling Yin kneeled down and begged for forgiveness, and was worried that she would be beaten by the bamboo rods.

"Hmm, I'll remember this... I will test you today. You will start reciting the alchemy technique and alchemy song, then I'll test your medicine identification... If there are any errors, hehe..."

Lu Renjia displayed a strict master face and continued, "Let's start with the Nine Transformation Alchemy Formula, then the Fire Hand Palm! Recite!"

"Yes, Master!"

Ling Yin obediently agreed and without hesitation started to recite. "Nine Transformation Alchemy Formula starts with the elements, first with ancient fire, then with wood..."

She was smart, to begin with, and now she could feel her

thoughts rushing through her mind, as she grew suspicious. 'How did I learnt so much of Master's alchemy techniques?'

As she smelled the concoction, she could immediately identify the pill being made. It was the usual Hundred Grass Pellet, which she could make it herself too.

'Wait... When did I learn the recipe for Hundred Grass Pellet?'

The young Ling Yin was suspicious, then heard Lu Renjia's voice again. "Hmm, you are familiar with the techniques which means you are hardworking. However, it is not enough to just know them, you still need to understand!"

Lu Renjia showed a fierce expression, and Ling Yin did not dare to think any further as she shivered.

"Let me ask you, what is the difference between Three Yang Fire and Three Yin Fire?"

"Their difference lies in the type of flame. The Three Yang Fire is charcoal flame, while the Three Yin Flame is..."

Ling Yin answered without hesitation.

"Then what is the Settling Jade Liquid and Rising Sun?"

"Jade Liquid refers to pill essence. When the pill essence settles, it is a sign of the pill condensing. The Rising Sun refers to the method of extracting the pill, generally speaking..."

...

Time passed quickly as the exchange went by, and the young Ling Yin became increasingly suspicious.

Master's questions were obviously those that she had not learnt, but unknowingly, she would be able to answer them, as though she had ten years of experience in alchemy.

'I seem to... forget something... Could it be that I've learnt alchemy before?'

Suddenly, there was an excruciating pain in her brain as she hugged her head with her hands, and squatted down in pain.

"Mm, you've done well in today's test, go and rest!"

As 'Lu Renjia' witnessed this scene, he had a weird expression and waved his hands. A fog emerged from a corner of the alchemy room, and slowly entered Ling Yin's body.

"Yes, Master! I will take my leave!"

Ling Yin heaved as the pain in her head subsided. She did not think about it anymore and left.

"Whooo..."

As the door closes, Lu Renjia sighed, and suddenly transformed into Fang Yuan, with pity on his face. "Even though I am in the dream building stage, I am still too inexperienced. While trying to retrieve the secrets and stimulating her, I might even accidentally make the real Ling Yin lucid, and might be at a disadvantage!"

"I have gained quite a lot today, so I'll just come back tomorrow!"

He smiled and the entire dream world collapsed.

...

"What a good dream!"

In the cell, Fang Yuan gazed at Ling Yin, who was soundly asleep and left the cell.

One would be innocent if he thought that he could conceal any secrets from a dream master!

Although he did not know any alchemy, this direct disciple of Lu Renjie must know, Furthermore, she was personally taught by him, which made her even more valuable.

"What a pity my dream-building skill was only elementary, otherwise I could just flip through her memories while she was awake, and could even reproduce the exact scene where Lu Renjia

taught her..."

Fang Yuan only reached the stage where he could edit a spiritual beast's memories. To do the same to a spiritual disciple, he would need more skill.

"With my new knowledge, I can still manage Lanruo!"

"Furthermore, it would also be good to gain more alchemy experience. After the holy stage, I might even follow the path of a dream alchemy master..."

With this to play cheat, what else could he say?

On the next day, Fang Yuan called for Lanruo and answered her queries.

Huang Fu Renhe was listening at one side, surprised.

He thought that Fang Yuan was only skilled in martial arts, and not in alchemy.

However, it seems that his Master's alchemy skills was even better than his, which made Fang Yuan even more mysterious in the eyes of Huang Fu Renhe, as his respect for him grew.

...

Unknowingly, half a year went by, and the new year has begun.

In Xia Country, the new year was an extremely important festival. In the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, every household was decorated with colourful lanterns and there were hustle and bustle all around.

Furthermore, many people spent a lot of money after surviving the battle. Even the normal household bought many new clothes and tons of meat to celebrate life after the war, and the entire city centre became much more prosperous.

In Qingye City.

"Master look... This is the Blood Clotting Powder which Lanruo

personally made!"

Lanruo wore a leopard print coat, and her face was glowing with happiness as she showed off her achievement to Fang Yuan.

"Oh?"

After hearing her, Fang Yuan diverted his attention from the festivities outside to the packet of powder in Lanruo's hands.

Fang Yuan grew a year older, but there wasn't any drastic change to him. He wasn't scared of the cold anymore and wore a thin clothing despite the snowfall outside, which made him special.

He took the packet of powder from Lanruo's hands and sniffed it. "That's right, this is good quality Blood Clotting Powder. Good job Lanruo, you are now a qualified pharmacist!"

A pharmacist is not an alchemy master; not even an alchemy disciple, but at least she was making progress.

Based on theory, she only had two more steps. The first being fusing her miniature elemental force to become an alchemy disciple, and the next would be to break through to elemental force to become an alchemy master and able to harness spiritual fire!

Only two steps for Lanruo to become the likes of Lu Renjia, like how in a blink of an eye, a chicken would become a duck.

In reality, Fang Yuan knew that it would be almost impossible.

Although it might seem that a normal person could become an alchemy master in two steps, and even looked much simpler than the 12 Golden Gates, the difficulty of it was immense.

Unlike martial arts where one can advance step by step, the way of a spiritual knight is to reach for the Heavens in one single step!

It was obvious that those without gifts or potential should give up. Only those with gifts, a strong foundation, and luck might have a chance.

Why luck?

This was a problem related to finding a master.

Take Lanruo for an example. If she did not meet Fang Yuan, she had to wait for ages before 'someone worthy sees potential in her', before a spiritual knight would take her in as a disciple.

The scariest possibility would be while waiting for the right master to come along, she might be abducted by the Wild Wolves Faction like the previous time, or even worse, taken in by an evil spiritual knight, who would use her as a sacrifice.

Fang Yuan would be satisfied if Lanruo could break through the bottleneck and become a qualified alchemy disciple before she turns 20.

"Master... Is there something bothering you?"

Lanruo raised her head and could sense that something was not right.

"Oh?"

Fang Yuan was surprised. "To detect this you must have a strong magical energy. I'm glad my spiritual food cultivation for you did not go to waste... You're right, Master is a little vexed."

"Lanruo wants to grow up and quickly mature so that I can help out Master and Brother!"

Lanruo exclaimed.

"Haha... Just some small matters, I won't need Lanruo's help for this one!"

Fang Yuan laughed and pinched Lanruo's cheeks.

"Master, don't"

While playing a fool with her, he had forgotten his worries.

"Master!"

When Lanruo left, Zhou Wenwu approached Fang Yuan and greeted him.

As the city master, he now had a beard and looked rather composed. "The Chen Family brought news. The people from the royal family are here..."

"Alright!"

Fang Yuan looked at the heavy snow outside and waved his hands. "Such urgency... They must be here because of Liu Yan. After all, this city master of ours is rather high-profile!"

Chapter 133: Princess

Fang Yuan guessed that since the demise of Lu Renjia, Liu Yan's ego began to inflate.

At the rock bottom, the only way was up.

Lu Renjia's betrayal was a hard hit on the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, but was that really the case? When the rebels had gathered together, Fang Yuan's tactic to strike the leader had helped the Secluded Mountain Prefecture alliance to remove Lu Renjia and two Sect Masters, banishing them into defeat. There were no other consequences for the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, and so there was no destruction or consequence to speak of.

Needless to say, Liu Yan took the opportunity to cleanse out the rebels and destroyed the opposing Sects and powers. The split of power among the 6 counties were re-gathered and the power was concentrated in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. Therefore, this incident was a big growth to his power.

At least there was no such nonsense in the other two Prefecture in Xia Country.

Based on Fang Yuan's thoughts, he was removing all those that might challenge his power and concentrate his influence.

Such a growth in power would undoubtedly lead to wild thoughts.

Furthermore, Liu Yan was a spiritual knight at the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm, and was just a step away from touching the Elemental Opening Realm!

"Based on the report from Chen Family, Liu Yan only took a short break before coming up with all these tricks. In this half a year, he had the intention to extend his power out of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture..... He might have even done it already!"

Previously during the chaos by Lu Renjia, Fang Yuan had already

guessed that external powers would get involved. With Liu Yan's standing now, he would only take revenge on them.

As Fang Yuan knew that in the previous year, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Forces recruited more and more people. For this, they willingly lowered their standards in recruitment and even allowed [Martial Artists (3rd Gate)] to join. With this move, they had more than 30,000 troops!

"With all these indications, it isn't hard to guess Liu Yan's intention..."

Fang Yuan sighed. "Furthermore... Even the royal family is unsettled! Why did they look for me instead of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture? Trying to get me involved?"

He felt depressed after thinking about it.

"Let the messenger see me!"

Fang Yuan arrived at the main hall and waved.

As a person who cultivates both spiritual techniques and martial arts, and a talent who harnesses elemental force, especially since he was only 20 and had a bright future, he could afford to have such airs.

"Yes, sir!"

Zhou Wenwu did not feel that anything was wrong when Fang Yuan instructed a messenger from the royal family, bowed and made way.

No long after, a few ladies entered the door and greeted Fang Yuan. "I am Xie Lingyun, please accept my greetings!"

The lady in front was tall and fair. She had a flower petal on her forehead and long black hair. She had a simple hairpin and allowed her hair to drape over her shoulders. She had the vibes of generosity, a different vibe from Shi Yutong.

"Your surname is Xie?"

Fang Yuan twitched his eyebrows. "What is your relationship with Xie Quan?"

Xie Quan was the current emperor of Xia Country!

Alas, his name was not feared enough. As a spiritual knight cum Wu Zong, Fang Yuan could call his full name without his title and no one would dare to question him.

At first, this was not his attitude. However, as this lady directly approached him as though she wanted to involve him in this, he would naturally not show any sign of respect.

"That's my father!"

Xie Lingyun forced a smile and looked at Fang Yuan. His eyes were filled with surprise.

"Oh, you're the princess, my apologies! Don't put it to heart!"

Fang Yuan casually apologised, and did not have a sense of respect.

The two servants beside Xie Lingyun were fuming, and only Xie Lingyun was calm and composed. "I am only a humble citizen, how would I dare to accept the title of princess?"

Her attitude impressed Fang Yuan. "May I enquire the purpose of your visit, princess?"

"To eliminate the impending disaster!"

Xie Lingyun maintained her straight face. "I have news that the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City Master Liu Yan has intentions to expand his control and invade Summer Sun Prefecture. Regardless of who prevails in the invasion, the damage in the Prefecture City would be folds of that in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City, therefore I am here to make peace of the situation..."

"You should be looking for the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City Master for this, why me?"

Fang Yuan touched his chin, confused.

"My words carry no weight, therefore I am here to ask for grandmaster's favour!"

Xie Lingyun bowed. "In the previous internal conflict, grandmaster's quick thinking and actions prevented chaos in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, and is all your merit. This time, the danger is much more than before, and I hope grandmaster will help me!"

Her sincere words touched Fang Yuan. "Please recover!"

As he waved, he released his elemental force, and a gentle force supported Xie Lingyun up.

'This force... Indeed a spiritual knight Wu Zong, incredible! And he is exactly same as in the legends, young and skilled!'

Xie Lingyun looked at Fang Yuan and blushed.

To establish relations with such a talented person, why would her emperor father care about a daughter? His purpose of sending her here might just be to offer her to Fang Yuan.

To give up a daughter and gain a strong ally would be common sense to those who do business.

Fang Yuan was not a lustful person, and there were many who would want to sleep with him; he did not have to choose a hard one.

"If you think I have much influence over the Prefecture Master, then you are wrong! I am not the person you are looking for!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and his words were direct, as though they could freeze Xie Lingyun's blood.

"Furthermore, the purpose of your visit is to find out more about me. Since you harbour ill intentions, why must I help you?"

He probed further and his words were like knives.

Xie Lingyun was shocked.

She detoured to here with this intention indeed but thought that this young Wu Zong could be easily taken advantage of. Even if she could not convince him, it was also alright to try her luck.

Never would she have thought that Fang Yuan would not react normally, and did not respond how a normal person would respond.

'This person has no regard for pride and honour like a young man, and only cares about physical rewards!'

Xie Lingyun was sorely disappointed. She knew that she had little to no chance of achieving her goal.

"All the land belongs to the emperor, and all that lives on this land are the emperor's citizens!"

She took in a deep breath, and her attitude took a 180 degrees change. "Grandmaster Fang is also a citizen of Xia County, and yet you have no loyalty to the country? Furthermore... You have already seen me, so how can you expect others to not suspect you?"

As Xie Lingyun said these words, her heart was pounding. She thought that Fang Yuan would be angered, but he froze and started clapping.

"Haha... Well said!"

Fang Yuan praised her. "Finally princess, you are showing your true colours!"

"Will grandmaster be willing to help?"

Xie Lingyun's eyes glittered in anticipation.

"I live in seclusion and is not willing to partake in any of these matters. I only know that there is a Secluded Mountain Prefecture above me, and as for the royal family of the Xia Country, although powerful, will have difficulties controlling those on the ground..."

Fang Yuan sighed, and Xie Lingyun blushed in embarrassment.

The lack of full control was always a contentious part of the royal family's power, and now Fang Yuan had to remind her of it.

"Furthermore, it's really simple to bridge the gap!"

Fang Yuan revealed a suspicious smile. "Think about it... If I killed you and brought your head to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City Master, do you think I can gain his trust?"

"What?!"

Xie Lingyun shuddered and the two servants behind her stood up, as though they were ready to fight for their lives.

Even if twenty more servants came forward, they would only die in Fang Yuan's hands.

"You are very lucky. Although you offended me, I am very gracious and will not kill you just because of our differences of opinion. Take your leave!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands. "Go where you should go, and don't stay in Qingye City!"

"That..."

Xie Lingyun bit her lip and did not forget her objective.

"The collaboration?"

Fang Yuan laughed sarcastically. "I never work with people who try to dig information from me!"

Hearing this reply, Xie Lingyun sighed, bowed and retreated with her servants.

...

"Master Fang! Master Fang!"

Not long after Xie Lingyun left, gongs were heard and Leader Niu rushed into the Prefecture City in a hurry.

"Niu Dingtian?"

"What are you doing here?" Fang Yuan asked while he was coaching Chen Ziying in the backyard.

"After receiving news of the princess making a detour, I rushed here and tired out a horse before reaching!"

Leader Niu scratched his head and laughed. "I'm here to remind you that the lady is trouble, don't get involved with her!"

"Thank you, Brother Niu!"

Hearing how he rushed here to deliver news, albeit late, Fang Yuan was still full of gratitude.

"Ah..... If it was last time, this issue would be nothing. But now, City Master's temper is getting worse. Just last month, he lectured Xiang Zilong and his brother over a small issue, causing them to lose face in front of the capital leaders..."

Niu Dingtian sighed.

Fang Yuan's eyes flashed as he heard the news.

Before the destruction of the world, something crazy would happen first; it seemed that this was applicable to Liu Yan too.

...

"Princess..."

In the royal carriage escort, in the largest carriage, a lady servant angrily commented. "That Fang Yuan was too much, how dare he insult you!"

"I don't have enough power, who can I blame?"

Xie Lingyun did not put that to heart but instead laughed. "Furthermore... We have gained something. At least we now know that Fang Yuan is together with Liu Yan. Isn't this a piece of valuable information?"

"I was tasked with an important mission on this trip to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, so a little unjust wouldn't matter!"

Looking in the direction of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, Xie Lingyun was filled with worry.

She was a messenger and brought the royal's family final condition with her.

If Liu Yan decided to do whatever he wanted, a war would break out!

Chapter 134: The Annual Meet

"The Secluded Mountain Prefecture here is so lively!"

A new year had arrived and the Secluded Mountain Prefecture had sent out invitation cards to invite Fang Yuan, other Wu Zongs, spiritual knights and the rich to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture for a banquet.

As they returned back to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City, the feeling was different this time.

"Haha.....Brother Xiang!"

Niu Dingtian and the others entered the Prefecture Master's mansion. When he saw Xiang Zilong, his eyes glittered. "I have missed you a lot!"

As he spoke, Niu Dingtian went forward and gave the other a hug.

"Thank you, Brother Niu, for your concern!"

Xiang Zilong's face looked a bit dull and he forced out a smile. "You don't have to raise your voice in the Prefecture Master's Prefecture. The city master has punished quite a number of people recently..."

If both of them were not close, Xiang Zilong would not be reminding Niu Dingtian about this.

Niu Dingtian's expression changed and asked, "Why?"

"The city master is displaying his might....."

Xiang Zilong shook his head and obviously didn't want to speak further as he saw Fang Yuan was present as well.

"Greetings, Leader Xiang!"

Fang Yuan was not really greeting him seriously and continued to ask, "Is the city master here?"

"The city master is seeing another important guest in the study room. All guests please head to the main hall for the banquet first!"

One of the three capital leaders of the Secluded Mountain who walked out the last greeted Fang Yuan.

"An important guest?"

Fang Yuan wavered but his expression was still the same. As he entered the main hall, he was complimented by many other guests.

After all, he was a young Wu Zong and had a bright future. So many people had wanted to establish a good rapport with him.

.....

Coincidentally, Liu Yan who was seeing the guest in the study room had mentioned Fang Yuan as well.

"Hehe.....Princess, I heard that you came to Qinghe County to poach one of my men?"

Liu Yan was giving a cold smile as he looked at Xie Lingyun.

At that moment, Xie Lingyun was standing upright with her drooping eyelids. It seemed that she didn't even dare to take in a deep breath.

The feeling she had gotten from the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City Master was different from the young Wu Zong.

The city master was not only serious and displaying his might, he was greedy and aggressive. She didn't know what to say in such a scary atmosphere.

However, she bit her teeth and continued with a tone of dissatisfaction, "The Secluded Mountain Prefecture is under Xia Country. Since there is a Wu Zong, I am here on behalf of the royal family to find out more. Is that wrong?"

Liu Yan didn't know what to say.

Even though the royal family of Xia Country had not much power

now, after all, the royal family was still of legitimism and it was better for him not to go against them.

He then gave a cold smile and continued, "It seems useless to talk about this. What is the purpose of your visit, Princess?"

"I'm here for the conflict.... I heard that you are using military forces against the Summer Sun Prefecture? Have you gotten that order from the royal family?"

Xie Lingyun continued with a stern look. "If not, it is wrong for you to do that and there is no reason for you to do that. Don't force the royal family to form an alliance with the other two prefectures to go against you!"

No matter what was the current situation like in Secluded Mountain Prefecture, when the two prefectures formed an alliance with the royal family, they would be very powerful. Hence, Liu Yan had to reconsider his actions.

"Humph.....The Summer Sun Prefecture Master is the one causing this conflict. He was the one behind causing the rebel which was led by Lu Renjia. Am I in the wrong to have my revenge?"

Liu Yan was pissed off.

"You have no evidence to prove that. How can you say so?"

Xie Lingyun shook her head and continued, "If you are willing to stop whatever you are doing, the royal family can help to mediate the situation by making the Summer Sun Prefecture compensate you....."

In fact, she was here to discuss the bottom line of the situation and the conditions for the mediation. She was using both the soft and the hard approaches at the same time.

However, Xie Lingyun was feeling a little sad in her heart.

Why had it become the case where the royal family had to be the

middleman when handling relationships between the prefectures?

Even though she was feeling sad, she didn't want to see an internal conflict in Xia Country. Xie Lingyun then said with her gentle voice, "What more do you want from us in order for you to stop?"

"You are asking me to set the conditions?"

Liu Yan laughed and continued, "I shall gladly set the conditions then.....3 pieces of Flame Jade Rock, 1 Deep-ocean Fire Coral and the length of it should not be less than 38 inches. I will also want 10 Lieyang Calming Pills and the Thousand Years Fire Grass....."

"Si....."

Even though she knew that Liu Yan would take this chance to ask for a lot of things, but when she heard what Liu Yan had wanted, she had to take in a deep breath.

"I see that you have quite a lot of things that you want.....However, the Flame Jade Rock can only be found deep in the volcanoes and a Wu Zong will be needed to obtain these rocks. The Fire Coral which is more than 38 inches is considered as the royal treasure of the Xia Country. Also, the Fire Grass and the Lieyang Calming Pills are high-quality spiritual objects and spiritual pills respectively. They are also the treasure of the Summer Sun Prefecture Master..."

Xie Lingyun gave a wry grin and continued, "If you want one of those, there is room for discussion. However, are you not making things hard for me when you ask for so many things at one go?"

"Humph, if he doesn't give these to me, I shall take it from him on my own then!"

Liu Yan let out a humph and there seemed to be a flame appearing above his eyebrows.

'This Liu Yan....is indeed at the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm. He is just a step away from achieving the Elemental

Opening Realm...'

No one knew that Xie Lingyun had much knowledge about that.

Just by hearing what Liu Yan had asked for, the spiritual objects were of high quality and were fire related. She then knew that he was preparing for that final breakthrough and needed lots of spiritual objects to help him to achieve that.

She would definitely not agree to the conditions.

Or else, if she gave what he wanted and he had achieved the Elemental Opening Realm successfully, she would be in danger in future.

However, if she didn't give what he wanted, there would be chaos and war. Also, Liu Yan could then obtain those things he needed by force.

There was not much difference as both outcomes were the same. This was a difficult decision for her to make.

At this point, Xie Lingyun knew that Liu Yan was crazy. He would want to obtain those supplies needed for the breakthrough at any cost.

.....

"The city master and the ambassador of the royal family have arrived!"

In the main hall, as the guests heard the arrival of those two, they immediately stopped whatever they were doing and looked at the two who had just arrived.

"Hehe.....A new year, a new beginning. Today is the start of the new year and with the well wishes from the royal family, all of us shall have a good drink!"

Liu Yan sat in his seat and said while drinking his wine.

"To the city master! To Xia Country!"

The guests then toasted and drank at one go.

As everyone was drinking, Fang Yuan took this chance to take a glance at Liu Yan and Xie Lingyun. Both of their faces were normal and both didn't look happy or angry. No one knew how their conversation had gone. Both of them maintained the look of a host.

'She thinks she can hide from everyone but she cannot hide from me.....This lady seems to be troubled by certain matters.....Looks like there are a lot of things happening in Xia Country...'

Fang Yuan sighed in his heart and took a quick glance at Liu Yan.

He could feel that the flame in Liu Yan was getting stronger. His magical energy was flaming and he seemed to be merciless.

'Liu Yan's cultivation had improved again. Looks like this was Lu Renjia had left behind after his death.....'

Even since that alchemy master was dead, even though Fang Yuan had taken a copy of the alchemy related books from the dead master, Liu Yan had kept the spiritual plants and spiritual pills that were made long ago for himself and didn't share any of them with Fang Yuan.

It seemed that with the help of the spiritual pills, Liu Yan's cultivation was able to improve and it looked like he could make a breakthrough for the Elemental Opening Realm anytime. No wonder he was so aggressive.

After all, if he managed to achieve the Elemental Opening Realm, he would be ranked number 1 among all other spiritual knights in this country and also the nearby countries!

Not to mention defeating Summer Sun Prefecture, not many would be able to stop Liu Yan if he chose to exterminate the whole of Xia Country and rule it.

After the banquet, a servant came to Fang Yuan and whispered to him that the city master would like to meet him.

Fang Yuan was sighing silently and thought that it didn't seem like a good thing. However, he still followed her to the study room.

"I'm here!"

Under the bright light, Liu Yan was seen standing with his hands behind his back and his back was facing Fang Yuan. He seemed to be enjoying an art piece that was hanging on the wall.

"I have seen you before, city master!"

As Fang Yuan got nearer to Liu Yan, he could feel a stronger pressure from Liu Yan and it felt as if Liu Yan's magical energy was about to blow up.

"I see that your essence, magic and spirit have changed a lot. Looks like you have improved a lot and I'm ashamed of myself.

Since Fang Yuan was becoming the dream building master, he had quite a big improvement in the Elemental Gathering Realm and therefore, his breath was different.

If the current Liu Yan who was in the room now was the Liu Yan that had not have any improvement in his cultivation, that Liu Yan would probably not be able to detect that Fang Yuan had improved. Fang Yuan was feeling serious and replied, "I only manage to cultivate another spiritual spell.....City master, you have sharp eyes indeed!"

"I see!"

Liu Yan nodded his head.

He didn't expect that Fang Yuan could achieve the high Elemental Gathering stage in just a short period time and Fang Yuan was now not far from his.

Fang Yuan had also cultivated a few strange spiritual spells, and hence there was a change to his breath. Hence, he agreed with what Fang Yuan had told him.

"What do you have for me, city master?"

Fang Yuan bent his body slightly and asked.

"Don't you think that after Lu Renjia is killed, both of us are not as close as before?"

Liu Yan then continued with a wry grin. "Not only you, even for my men. I'm now only closer to Taoist Mu Li..."

As he spoke, Fang Yuan became alert but was surprised.

'I didn't expect Liu Yan to trust Taoist Mu Li the most.....Hang on, he is actually an evil person on the inside but has pretended to be a good person. How many spiritual knights can I actually get along with?'

Fang Yuan was a little jealous of Taoist Mu Li and started to make guesses about him.

"I have the intention to attack Summer Sun, and hence I will need your help once again!"

Liu Yan didn't even wait for Fang Yuan's opinion and instead, he listed his request out straight away.

"I'm not capable enough, I'm afraid....."

Fang Yuan shook his head and didn't accept Liu Yan's request.

He was not that crazy enough to follow Liu Yan and go against the whole of Xia Country.

If Liu Yan had already broken through the Elemental Opening Realm, he could still consider.

"Hmm?"

Liu Yan frowned and turned around. Fang Yuan could instantly feel a great amount of pressure going towards him.

"I'm living alone and prefer to be separated from the rest of the world. If you do not have anything else for me, I will take my leave first!"

Fang Yuan did not show any fear.

He was a spiritual knight that had reached the high Elemental Gathering stage. Even if he couldn't manage to defeat Liu Yan, he could still be able to escape away from him!

His Iron-tailed Black Eagle was circling above and standing by!

Since he had an escape route, he had nothing to be afraid of.

"If you are willing to help me, after the war, I will let you take on the role of the Prefecture Master!"

Liu Yan also knew that using his power as a city master to force Fang Yuan was the worst method, hence he brought up the conditions.

"Hmm?"

Fang Yuan was startled and said, "Since city master, you don't have the intention to rule the Summer Sun, why do you want to invade it still?"

"There is a saying that even if there are thousands of people stopping me from doing it, I will still bravely do it!"

Liu Yan's reply was decisive.

Chapter 135: Fallout

"Do it?"

Fang Yuan was taken aback.

In Liu Yan's words, to 'do it' should mean to enter the Elemental Breaking Realm.

Since he was even willing to let our his appointment as Prefecture Master, it showed that he did not care too much about power anymore.

Based on Fang Yuan's magical energy, he could easily tell that Liu Yan was speaking the truth.

"Since that is so... Why not stay low, because with Prefecture Master's ability..."

Fang Yuan stopped halfway and looked at Liu Yan, aghast.

"You can tell!"

Liu Yan shook his head in despair. "I am over 300 years old, and I am lucky to have extended my lifespan with the help of a Fire Dragon Fruit. However, through the previous few fights, I have depleted my Essence, Spirit and Magic, and have not much longer to live..."

"Based on my condition, my body is starting to die of old age. It would be impossible for me to break through before I die, and I can only follow the crooked ways to break through... The good thing is that in the collection that Lu Renjia left behind, there is such a secret way. It describes how I can use large quantities of similar-type spiritual things to increase my chances of breaking through..."

Liu Yan had greed written all over his face.

If he could break through to the Elemental Breaking Realm, he could lengthen his lifespan, and therefore was willing to take this

gamble.

"Prefecture Master, why do you share such confidential information with me!"

Fang Yuan sighed.

Liu Yan did not have long to live!

If this news spreads, imagine how much chaos would it create!

Furthermore, Liu Yan's sharing was honest and desperate.

"Sadly... I am not interested in this appointment as Prefecture Master, Master should look for someone else!"

Fang Yuan shook his head.

He was not interested in such a large scale rebellion and such a gamble for life and death.

It didn't matter to him if Liu Yan as dying or not; he was at his prime time! It was not logical to get himself in all this mess for a slim chance of rewards.

"Eh?"

Liu Yan's fiery eyebrows twitched.

He thought that he understood Fang Yuan well enough, and even helped him a lot previously. Who would've thought that Fang Yuan would reject to help him, and this gave him a feeling that Fang Yuan had no sense of gratitude.

"Hong! Hong!"

As the spiritual knight raged, the surrounding air burst into flames, as though many flames were burning at once.

Streaks of colours appeared in mid-air and combined to form a few fire snakes, as though there were about to combine to become a dragon.

'Eh? Fight just because of differences in opinion? Could it be that fire-type spiritual knights are all fiery-tempered?'

With all these suspicions, Fang Yuan found it even weirder as he looked at Liu Yan.

Liu Yan seemed to have lost his mind after so much cultivation. After all, Fang Yuan cultivated both martial arts and spiritual techniques, and he would need to spend a large amount of effort to take him down. If he made everyone know that there was internal conflict within the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, would that do him any good?

Might the people of Summer Sun Prefecture celebrate as well?

However, Fang Yuan was not willing to sit there and wait for his death.

Before the fire around Liu Yan emerged, a thin layer of fog already appeared around Fang Yuan. It was thick and had occasional waves like clouds, and covered the entire room.

"Hmm... A firefly's glow and you dare to challenge the moon's glare? Die!"

Liu Yan waved his hand and 9 streaks of crimson light shot out as though it was released from a bow, and pierced a large hole into Fang Yuan's chest.

"Pu!"

'Fang Yuan' was expressionless. There were ripples all over his body, and slowly it became a fog which dissipated.

"Shadowstep!"

Fang Yuan had split into many images of himself, rushed out of the room door and to the courtyard outside.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

In the air, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle circled around and chirped, as though it was prepared to land.

"How dare you!"

Liu Yan was fuming. He took a few steps out and waved. A green fire dragon was formed and flew around the sky, opening its jaws and lashing out its claws.

"Elemental energy of the Nine Heavens, hear my command..."

As he recited, the elemental energy around was disturbed; he was really fuming mad.

'Liu Yan...is asking for death!'

Fang Yuan squinted.

"Halt!"

Before the fight could begin, a black shadow flew into the middle of the courtyard and landed; It was the Wind Chasing Falcon, separating Liu Yan and Fang Yuan. Taoist Mu Li leapt down from the bird. "Both of you are talents of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, so why spoil your relationship over a small matter? Sect Master Fang is young and direct, so just apologise and let's all forget about this..."

He had the attitude of a mediator, and accompanying the gentle breeze and drizzle, Liu Yan calmed down and the fire dragon dissipated.

"Taoist Mu Li is right, I offended Master. Please accept my apology and forgive me!"

Seeing this scene, Fang Yuan was still suspicious, but he knew that he should take a step back, and therefore immediately bowed and apologised.

"Hm... Forget it!"

Liu Yan brushed him aside, and Taoist Mu Li flicked a whistle into the air. As it flew up, it made a high-pitched whistle.

"Dismiss the guards!"

The activated soldiers turned around and like how water would seep through sand, they disappeared in a moment.

"I have other important things, I shall take my leave first!"

Fang Yuan cupped his fists in politeness, leapt on the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and flew off.

"Who would've known that this boy had such potential to cultivate to such a realm... Some hard-working spiritual knights don't even get to achieve what he has now. I'm afraid that I was too reckless in handling today's situation..."

Only when the black shadow disappeared did Liu Yan sighed.

Only when he fought with him he realised Fang Yuan's cultivation was already at such a level!

"He is more than qualified to become a Prefecture Master."

Taoist Mu Li looked serious as well. "He is such a talent!"

He saw Fang Yuan's abilities and knew that the Prefecture Master would not be able to stop the fight in the heat of the battle, which was why he stood out to mediate.

Otherwise, if both of them really fought, Liu Yan might not be able to take Fang Yuan down, and instead, there would be a commotion with dire consequences.

It would be even more disadvantageous for his invasion plan.

"Pass the order down!"

Liu Yan frowned. "If anyone spreads whatever happened today, I will kill their entire family!"

"Yes Master!"

Taoist Mu Li took his leave, but he appeared secretive...

...

Second day in the Prefecture City.

People from all over arrived here to form a large market, business was very good.

Fang Yuan changed into a brown robe and entered the market.

Even though they only fought a hand, Liu Yan should know his abilities. Together with the Iron-tailed Black Eagle, as long as he was not trapped, he should be able to escape!

Since it was such, there was no meaning to find trouble for him; that would only make him more enemies.

'It's good to be at odds, I'll have one more reason to reject him...'

'Seeing Liu Yan's energy yesterday, although it still had a strong spiritual pressure, he felt a hint of evil energy coming from his forehead. It seemed that the secret way from Lu Renjia's collection is not any good, and it might have dire consequences...'

Fang Yuan was casually strolling through the stalls and stopped by a few to take a look.

At his current cultivation realm, he would not lay his eye on any normal things. The few exceptions also did not pique his interest, and he felt regretful for not being able to find anything good.

'Although... It would not make sense for all the good stuff to come to me, that's like a story in a novel!'

Fang Yuan laughed and looked at the sun.

It was noon, and the warm sunlight landed on him, giving him a different feeling.

As he was looking for a restaurant to fill his appetite, a plain-looking horse stopped in front of him.

"Grandmaster Fang, we meet again!"

As the curtains flipped, it revealed an excited Xie Lingyun. "Please enter the carriage, and we can discuss things!"

"Again?"

Fang Yuan shook his head. Although he knew that whatever happened in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture could not be

hidden from Liu Yan, and furthermore he fought with Liu Yan yesterday, he still decisively went up the carriage.

"To the best restaurant!"

He ordered her the moment he entered, as though Xie Lingyun was the carriage master.

"Since grandmaster is interested, Xie Lingyun is willing to accommodate. If grandmaster comes by the capital next time, Xie Lingyun can treat you to a vegetarian meal at Clear Spring Temple, and I promise you, it will be unforgettable!"

Xie Lingyun bit her lips and smiled.

"My apologies, but I live on the outskirts of the city and have no interest in the capital!"

Fang Yuan replied sarcastically.

"Please do not take it to heart!"

Xie Lingyun apologised and appeared serious. "It was Lingyun's inappropriateness the previous time, please forgive me!"

"Since you are here, it seems that you are rather well-informed and know about yesterday night's fight. However, you can stop pleading for me to help you. Our Prefecture Master is extremely passionate about war, and it is not likely anyone can change his mind..."

Fang Yuan shook his head.

"Indeed..."

Xie Lingyun shuddered and almost froze in the carriage. "Would the accomplishments of the Xia Country be wasted?"

"Stop!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands. "Why are you so desolate? Do you think that by gathering the forces around Xia Country, you cannot defeat Liu Yan?"

"So what if I can defeat him? The neighbouring Yuan and Wu Country are both watching out. Once our country is in a mess, they will send in their troops and destroy us..."

Xie Lingyun forced a laughter.

"They why not aid Liu Yan in breaking through the Elemental Breaking Realm bottleneck? If he can succeed, how would the neighbouring countries dare to offend us?"

Fang Yuan had some doubts but did not wait for Xie Lingyun to reply. "That's true too... How can you all trust Liu Yan? This is not a long-term solution. If he continues to be greedy, it will be catastrophic! Therefore, all you are hoping for is for the situation to come under control."

The higher the authority, the stronger the hope for those at the bottom to be settled and for the hierarchy to remain stagnant forever.

At this time, the 'Alpha' or 'Rebellions' would appear, but their resistance would not be strong.

Although Liu Yan was neither of those two, he was still a factor which attracted the attention of many. Unless there was a breakthrough, the outcome would still be feared.

Chapter 136: Secrecy

The journey to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture over the new year ended on a bad note.

Fang Yuan returned to Qinghe County completely unaffected by the sudden rise in tensions in the country.

To Fang Yuan, to be able to enter the dream world to practise martial arts, grow and cultivate his spiritual plants and to impart his teachings to his two disciples on a daily basis was a joyful way to live his life.

Furthermore, he had several precious treasures waiting for him to master and control. He did not have the time to bother about what was going on around him.

...

Within the dream world.

"Bang!"

The corpse of the Sect Head of the Five Ghosts Sect fell to the floor.

Ling Yin chuckled dryly and said, "Congratulations on defeating such a great enemy senior. You need not live your life in worry in the future anymore!"

"This person is scheming and had inserted for a spy within my county. His objectives and intentions were not to be underestimated...Thankfully we made him expose them during this operation to hide the treasure map..."

Shi Yutong oozed with confidence. This was so unlike the pathetic state of her future self.

This scene was from the war over the treasure map in Lieyang County!

Furthermore, Fang Yuan was watching from a third person's

perspective. Even though he was standing next to the two ladies and observing them, they were completely oblivious to his presence.

"I have a stronger control over Ling Yin's dream world now and I can already retrieve her memories..."

Even though this was in an imaginary realm, it was in fact Ling Yin's memories of what happened before.

To a dream master, nothing was a secret!

"The works of a dream master are simply so..."

As Fang Yuan immersed himself in the scene, he was equally awestruck. As long as a dream master was determined, nobody could hide their thoughts or secrets from him.

Even a person's life experiences, memories, wealth could be taken away in the dream world.

"How is this called a dream-building master? It should be called a dream-stealing master...even a pig could become a Wu Zong pig if it trained for many years in a Wu Zong's dream world!"

Fang Yuan guessed that as long as any dream master had the heart, he could become the top martial artist anywhere he went!

"Of course, I also have to consider the issue of natural talent and amount of effort put in...a dream master must focus on his cultivating path and spend less time on other useless aspects. To invest this way over the long term, might also bring about some negative impacts...but it is also too unfathomable!"

Whatever Fang Yuan was doing to Ling Yin was of another kind. He was not extracting her experience in alchemy. Instead, he was looking through her other secrets.

The bright moon illuminated the dark starless sky as a crow flew south.

The violent commotion from afar died down slowly.

It was obvious that those martial artists realised which side had already won and did not dare to take a second look before escaping swiftly.

As long as Shi Yutong and the head of the Five Ghosts Sect were not both seriously injured, there was no way for any of them to take action at all. It was the best time for them to get away while they still could.

Fang Yuan stood aside and watched silently.

"Treasure map?"

A spark flickered in Ling Yin's eyes.

As Fang Yuan was in control of her dream world, he could also sense the curiosity that popped up in Ling Yin.

"Why? Junior Ling Yin, you are from a rich family and have an alchemy master, why would you be interested in my little treasure?"

Shi Yutong forced a closed lip smile.

A spark flickered again in Ling Yin's eyes as she pressed further, "Senior, you are making fun of me again. Tell me more about it..."

"I only just learnt about this!"

Shi Yutong continued, "Do you know that the ancestors of the head of the Five Ghosts Sect were not from this country?"

"Hmm?" Ling Yin was taken aback and she continued to ask, "Could it be they were immigrants? But there is nothing inappropriate about this!"

"It does not just end there!"

Shi Yutong shook her head, "The ancestors of this person were from the Da Qian Empire!"

"What?"

Ling Yin shuddered.

"Now do you also find that something is wrong? Da Qian is situated so far away from here and the road here is incredibly perilous. His ancestors defied all odds to reach here. They had to be incredibly strong to pass through the many mountains and rivers to reach this place...Furthermore, these people picked a poor rural area like ours to settle down in. It is extremely suspicious!"

Shi Yutong spoke on slowly.

Ling Yin thought about it quickly and then replied, "But...How do you know all this? Did you also plant spies within their sect?"

"I just returned the favour..."

Shi Yutong waved her hand. It was common for big powers to plant spies in each other's sects.

Even if the head of the Five Ghosts Sect did not plant the Guo family as spies in their county, she would have done the same. This was nothing to do with favours, it was most basic thing to do to a potential rival sect.

"The ancestors of the head of the Five Ghosts Sect were from Da Qian, could it be that the treasure map was his?"

Ling Yin's eyes lit up.

"Indeed!"

Shi Yutong nodded her head in admission and replied, "It was rumoured that the particular ancestor was incredible power and unpredictable. However, he did not live a long life and died soon after he reached here. Apparently, he sustained a serious injury and before he died, he left a set of treasure maps split into three sets to be looked after by three of his disciples!"

"Three sets?"

Ling Yin asked curiously, "Why? If he had such a precious treasure, wouldn't it be better to just hand it over to his heir?"

"I am not sure about this, maybe he had a deeper intention!"

Shi Yutong continued saying, "After he died, the three disciples fell out with each other which made it impossible to piece back the full treasure map. It stayed that way until now. Now, the three of them are already dead and they do not have surviving family members. However, it is the descendants of the particular ancestor himself who are now trying to reclaim the treasure map!"

"Based on what know, he has already gotten one set. But, it was stolen away by Han Shou's disciple. The set that just has emerged is the second set! In order to find out the exact location of the treasure, we need all three sets together!"

"The treasure left by the expert from Da Qian?"

Ling Yin's eyes lit up and remarked, "My master might also be interested in this!"

"If Master Lu could help us, it would be great!"

Shi Yutong then said in a serious tone, "If that person had such a valuable treasure hidden, why didn't he leave it to his heir? There must be some complication going on that even he found difficult, how could I work alone? Please ask Master Lu..."

"There are no doubts that this was Shi Yutong. She was clear about her actions and knew the risks and benefits of them. Furthermore, she was not blinded by greed of the treasure...."

Fang Yuan stood aside and watched on. Suddenly, he snapped his fingers.

"Snap!"

He snapped out of the dream world.

After all, this was all the memories Ling Yin had about the treasure map.

He could now know every thought that went through Ling Yin's mind. Ling Yin could not hide even the smallest idea that she had from him. However, he was powerless against Shi Yutong.

This was also after all just Ling Yin's dream, not Shi Yutong's!

"To do this on a Wu Zong like Shi Yutong is a bit too risky based on my current skill level!"

Even though Shi Yutong was held captive by him and definitely knew and experienced a lot more than Ling Yin, Fang Yuan was cautious about entering her dreams.

To use such a technique was almost similar to gambling.

If Fang Yuan were to be injured or killed in her dream world, his magical energy would also be damaged. Furthermore, Fang Yuan was not confident of suppressing the malicious intent in a Wu Zong's subconsciousness.

"When I've reached the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm, after perfecting my dream-building skills, I might try it out on Shi Yutong..."

Fang Yuan scratched his chin as he thought of what he just saw.

The treasure map was extremely precious, and he already had two out of the three sets. What he did not expect was that the treasure belonged to an expert from Da Qian, which excited him slightly.

"What a pity the head of the Five Ghosts Sect is already dead. If not, I would definitely be able to obtain the most detailed information from his dream world. Now that the sect is destroyed, their archives have probably been completely looted...At least there is still hope in retrieving the archives, I just have to get Zhou Wenwu and my other disciples to carry out this mission for me!"

This was the benefit of being a major power. He could activate the people under him to carry out these tedious and troublesome tasks for him. He could afford to appear after they have found the relevant items.

"Carry on then!"

After considering his options, he stretched out his arms.

"Whoo whoo!"

The entire dream world changed before him.

The sun rose from the east and set in the west quickly. People moved at an incredibly fast-forwarded pace and it was difficult to properly see them.

Of course, this entire world was from the lens of Ling Yin.

Her entire dream world was now under the complete control of Fang Yuan.

"This is the terrifying part of being a dream master...I just have to work a bit harder and soon I can be in full control of her soul. Almost like Red-eyed White Bird, I can even alter her memories and swear allegiance to me..."

Fang Yuan was clear about his potential abilities, yet he was grounded at the same time.

"If this sort of powers were not controlled won't the world be in utter chaos?"

"I wonder if there are any laws or restrictions regarding the advancements of dream masters in Da Qian..."

Fang Yuan was aware of the sinister side of humans. If this sort of powerful ability developed without any form of control, Da Qian would have become a hellish abyss a long time ago.

Of course, laws and regulations were merely just words written on pieces of paper. What could law enforcement officials possibly do to deal with dream masters?

"Master!"

Fang Yuan got out of his thoughts and observed the next scene.

Within the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, Ling Yin came to the front of Lu Renjia and respectfully bowed and reported, "The

preparations have already been made. I successfully convinced Shi Yutong to support your claim to the throne!"

"We have to adapt to the changing times!"

Lu Renjia kept his hands behind his back as he sighed.

As Fang Yuan watched from the side, he realised something was amiss and he thought, "This time should be the birthday celebration of the head of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. It is also before Lu Renjia's rebellion so why isn't he all pumped up and ready to fight? Instead he looks so solemn here. Could the rumours of external intervention be true? Such that Lu Renjia was not in control of the situation?"

Ling Yin also sensed that something was not right as the expression on her master's face was one she had rarely seen.

"Ling Yin!"

Lu Renjia raised his head suddenly and pulled out a secret diagram and ordered, "Memorise this diagram and then destroy it once you are done!"

"This is..."

Looking at the map on her hand, Ling Yin was slightly puzzled.

"This is the location of one of my secret mansions. It is within Lieyang County, and this secret is only between the two of us..."

Lu Renjia dryly said, "If all goes well this time, everything will be alright. If things go south, and if...something bad happens to me, go to this place. Focus your energy on training, do not be involved in the affairs around you, do not look for spiritual knights and do not come out again. Most importantly, do not try to seek revenge for me!"

"Master..."

A strong premonition grew as Ling Yin fell to her knees crying.

Chapter 137: The Reunion

"The Secret Hole Mansion in Lieyang County?"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered and went forward to take a good look at the secret map.

"Hmm? Who are you?"

There was someone standing beside them all along and both Lu Renjia and Ling Yin had not realised that before. Both of them were very shocked.

"I should leave here as soon as possible!"

As Fang Yuan saw that Ling Yin's face was getting distorted and seemed like she was about to be awakened, there was a sudden lightning and thunder. Fang Yuan, being a wise man, did not want to continue further as the odds were against him and hence decided to leave the dream world.

.....

Back in the real world, in the prison in Qinghe County.

"Pitiful lady..."

Fang Yuan opened his eyes and saw Ling Yin, who was lying on the wooden bed and she looked as if she just had a nightmare. Fang Yuan started to pity her.

He had gotten into her dream these few days to obtain secrets and this had already exhausted her mentally. If he continued to do this, there could be a confusion for her between the dream world and the real world and hence, she might become crazy afterwards!

"Luckily I have almost gotten everything that I need from her already...."

As he recalled the secret location Lu Renjia was at, Fang Yuan was feeling a little excited.

That was the escape route that the alchemy master had prepared for himself and was definitely top secret!

Unfortunately, for Lu Renjia, he didn't expect Ling Yin to be in the hands of a dream master before he was caught and now Fang Yuan knew where he was.

"So he is in Lieyang County....what a coincidence. Looks like I will have a visit to there then!"

Fang Yuan murmured to himself and immediately looked for Zhou Wenwu. Fang Yuan then gave him some orders.

.....

When he thought of doing something, he would do it.

Fang Yuan felt that he himself was more of a person who was more involved in actions. He waited for the news from the investigation made by Zhou Wenwu's men, then he would travel to the city of Lieyang County by his Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"Since the disintegration of the Five Ghosts Sect, Lieyang County has benefited from that. Even though there are a few chaotic things happening, no war has happened here before...."

Fang Yuan got down from the eagle outside the city and entered the city alone. He enjoyed the scenery along the way.

Because of the trade in ore, the city here was prosperous and it didn't look poor.

On the street, there were many martial artists who were quite powerful. Many of them had either daggers or sword with them and they were very alert. The atmosphere was quite tense.

"Looks like the rumour is true!"

He recalled the report from Zhou Wenwu and gave a smile. "The Five Ghosts Sect.....has become active again!"

Ever since the battle for the treasure map broke out, the Five Ghosts Sect Master lost his life and left behind a few elders

and disciples. The Five Ghosts Sect was then known to have incurred a big loss. Also, with suppression from the Spirit Returning Sect, many of the disciples had their names hidden to keep a low profile.

This matter was supposed to remain like this. The disciples could either thrive somewhere else or continue to suffer here. It would take at least 10 to 100 years for the sect to be rebuilt.

However, it was different now!

The Spirit Returning Sect was involved in the rebel. Even Shi Yutong had been taken away by Fang Yuan and was kept in the prison ever since.

The Spirit Returning Sect was being rooted from the ground and the sect would not have a firm position in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture.

However, Lieyang County had always been on the side of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City Master and there were rumours saying that the remaining few from the Five Ghosts Sect had put in much effort to fight against the rebel forces.

Hence, there would be rewards. With the support from the new governor of the county, the disciples of the Five Ghosts Sect gathered once again to rebuild their sect!

This was definitely not an easy task!

Even though the Spirit Returning Sect was out of the picture now, there were others who had depended on the embezzlement of the funds of the Five Ghosts Sect and they would definitely not agree to this and there would be a conflict between the two parties.

Fang Yuan thought of the worst case scenario. It was that the governor was likely to claim the power of the sect when both parties were busy fighting.

It was just too mainstream to claim the power by force.

After all, Lieyang County was different from the Qinghe County. Lieyang County didn't have a governor who was Wu Zong and the governor hence could not use force to suppress the whole county. Hence the governor could only use that approach.

The two parties had also realised what the governor was trying to achieve but could only continue with the governor's plan. Hence, this was the beauty of having great power.

"Eh?"

Suddenly, Fang Yuan saw a familiar person and followed the person immediately.

"The battle of the Five Ghosts Sect, Strong Flame Sect and the Big River Faction is the headline here in the Lieyang County. The alliance of the brothers from the Bull's Head Mountain, the Black Wind Village and the Eighteen Mountains will have to be pushed into the limelight as well!"

It was a man who was 84 inches tall who spoke that and he was carrying a giant axe. It made people became fearful of him.

"Isn't he Wang Fugui, whom I have met in Shaoyang City, the owner of the Bull's Head Mountain?"

Fang Yuan simmered with laughter. "Well, this fool is also here."

"Eh? Are you not Brother Fang?"

When Wang Fugui saw Fang Yuan, his eyes glittered and went close to Fang Yuan. He then greeted Fang Yuan loudly.

"Haha.....I have been missing you since the last time we separated!"

"Slow down slow down!"

Fang Yuan shifted Wang Fugui's big hand away using his shoulders. "What are you all doing?"

"Hehe.....I shall introduce to you the brothers from the Bull's Head Mountain. I'm here with them is so that I can take this

chance to have a firm position here in Lieyang County and become famous!"

Wang Fugui pounded his chest with much confidence and introduce a few other muscular men to Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan looked at those muscular men and thought that many people would have avoided them. He then shook his head silently.

This group would definitely attract lots of attention as they walked down the street noisily.

Especially now there was a normal person standing with that group, Fang Yuan could sense that many pairs of eyes were staring at them right now and couldn't take it anymore.

"I wish you all the best in your future endeavours. I shall take my leave first....."

Fang Yuan shook hands and couldn't wait to leave.

However, Wang Fugui pulled Fang Yuan back and whispered to him, "Recently, there is a young Wu Zong in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture who has become famous. He is originally from Qinghe County and his age is not big at all. Also, he is highly skilled in medicine. Is that person you, Brother Fang?"

If it was someone else who had asked Fang Yuan, he would just say it was someone else who coincidentally had the same name as him.

However, Wang Fugui had previously seen how Fang Yuan defeated Gui Wusheng and that had left a deep impression on Wang Fugui. Hence, Wang Fugui would have thought that person was Fang Yuan.

"Yes, that person is me....."

Fang Yuan answered softly.

He already knew that Wang Fugui was bold but cautious. He was not as reckless as he seemed to be, or else, Wang Fugui would have

revealed Fang Yuan's identity to the public already.

"Hehe....don't worry, Brother Fang. My mouth is very tight. I have not mentioned to anyone about the previous incident!"

Wang Fugui laughed and knew the benefits of keeping a secret.

Although Fang Yuan didn't really have to hide his real identity during this visit, he just didn't want to have unnecessary trouble.

"I owe you!"

Fang Yuan shook hands with him and continued, "Wang Fugui, do you know where the Five Ghosts Sect is right now? Bring me there, please!"

"No problem!"

Wang Fugui patted his own chest with confidence and gladly accepted the request. His eyes were filled with excitement.

With an expert now to suppress the enemy, the group of them knew that victory would be on their side definitely.

"The Five Ghosts Sect previously had a big temple in the city and also another piece of spiritual land. However, ever since the Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master was killed, the temple was claimed over by the Spirit Returning Sect and the spiritual land was separated and taken over by other great powers! Even though the remaining people from the Five Ghosts Sect had gathered together, it was hard to recover those lost assets and they had to find another place to rebuild..."

Wang Fugui was leading the way and was talking non-stop. "If Brother Fang, you didn't look for me, one would not know where they were right now....."

"Hey, Wang Fugui, are we not heading to the Big River Faction to look for trouble?"

Beside him, one of the men, who was confused, shouted and questioned him.

"Get out!"

Wang Fugui slapped the man and then continued talking to Fang Yuan. "You see, this is one of the matters my brothers have wanted to settle and the matter is the biggest one in the whole of Bull's Head Mountain. It is just a small faction. I shall even out with them later!"

"Why? Has the Big River Faction provoked you again?"

Fang Yuan asked with a forced smile.

"It's nothing....."

Wang Fugui then continued loudly, "Who here is not clear of the bottom line of the Big River Faction? They are just a bunch of water pirates! Previously, we have business on land while they have theirs on the sea. We have nothing to do with each other. However, they have stolen our business once they are back on land. We cannot endure that any longer!"

The group then were busy chatting and laughing. Their noise level was quite high and passer-bys had to avoid them.

Not long after, they reached a building.

"Isn't this....a martial arts centre?"

Fang Yuan wiped his sweat and asked, "Wang Fugui, are you sure you have brought me to the correct place?"

"It's definitely this place. I'm correct!"

Wang Fugui pointed and said, "I had heard that since this place was claimed by a sect, the place was run by a disciple....You see, which normal martial arts centre would be guarded by such skilful people?"

"That's true!"

Fang Yuan walked a few steps forward and looked at the two tense-looking disciples who were guarding the entrance of the centre. He used his magical energy and could feel that the disciples

had energies that were similar to Xuan Yin Heart Technique in their bodies.

Normal disciples would not know the mystery behind the Xuan Yin Heart Technique. However, the Five Ghosts Sect was specialised in evil techniques and it was very easy to recognise that.

Fang Yuan, who had researched on Xuan Yin Heart Technique in the dream world for many years and had encapsulated that technique into the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique when he had broken through Wu Zong, thus empowering his Yin and was known as the sect master of the Xuan Yin Heart Technique, definitely would not recognise that energy wrongly.

"Remain where you are! Who are you? Our martial arts centre has been closed for a few months and it is now the Five Ghosts Sect's temple. What are you trying to do?"

The two disciples had already seen the big noisy group and started to have muscle cramps, but they still stood out and shouted at the group.

"Both of you?"

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes and continued, "Are not qualified. Ask your leader to come out now!"

"Bang!"

He released a little amount of his energy and two disciples could instantly feel the coldness of the Yin energy. They then scurried off in shock.

Chapter 138: Convince

How skilled was Fang Yuan?

Notwithstanding his cultivation as a dream master, just by his Wu Zong status, he was able to start a sect on his own!

Needless to say, he did the unthinkable and broke through the 13th Gate using the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique, and fused the various heart techniques into it.

Xuan Yin Heart Technique was just one of it!

By releasing his energy, how could the two lowly disciples of the Five Ghosts Sect take it? Their legs went numb and both of them collapsed. They were shocked out of their wits.

"Great one, where do you come from?"

There was chaos in the martial arts centre. After a short while, numerous Five Ghosts Sect disciples escorted an old man with white hair out, as though they were meeting a strong enemy.

He stared at Fang Yuan, full of curiosity.

"I shall not mention my name. I am here to request a favour!"

Fang Yuan exclaimed.

"Mm?"

Although the old man had a good temper, after hearing what Fang Yuan said, he almost broke out. "Who asks for favours like this? I have yet to see everything in this world!"

He looked at the mysterious Fang Yuan but did not act rashly. "May I know what favour is that?"

"Very simple!"

Fang Yuan continued. "I want the secret records of your sect and the diary of your grandmaster. Of course... and the last secret mystery of the Xuan Yin Heart Technique!"

"What?"

The old man changed his expression.

Although the secret records of the sect and the diary of the grandmaster were not martial arts, they still involved the privacy of the sect. How could they easily give it to a stranger?

Furthermore, he still asked for the secret mystery of the Xuan Yin Heart Technique!

To a sect, this action was akin to pulling out its roots!

"Are you intending to force me to fight you?"

The old man took two steps forward and looked extremely stern.

"Grandfather Wuhun, no..."

Behind him, a small girl appeared and shouted, but was held back by the other female disciples.

"Oh, so you're the last surviving Five Ghosts Sect Death Gate Elder!"

Fang Yuan continued mocking him. "So? Do you want to fight me?"

"I have no intention to bully anyone, I am only retaliating in self-defence..."

Gui Wuhun looked at the increasing number of martial artists surrounding and sighed.

"Keke... Are you seeing this? My brother's robbery is so stylish!"

Among the crowd, Wang Fugui patted his chest honourably.

"It seems that those people are not admiring us, but looking down on us..."

As he scanned the crowd, his eyes glittered. "I think I spotted a few enemies of ours!"

"Mm? Where?"

Wang Fugui swung his axe. "Haha... My axe is thirsty. Don't run, have a taste of my axe!"

...

Gui Wuhun focused and seemed to be oblivious to the surroundings. He focused his strength in his arms and released it out, as though he had marked out territory, and engulfed the young man opposite him.

'The rebirth of the Five Ghosts Sect shall begin from this fight!'

The scene where all the disciples escaped after the sect was destroyed kept replaying in his mind.

This enraged him, making him push his strength to the limits. This nearly allowed him to break through to the 4 Heavenly Gates bottleneck!

Even though his opponent was an expert in inner force, he had the confidence to end this battle swiftly.

"Elder Wuhun is impressive!"

Many Five Ghosts Sect disciples bowed in respect as they witnessed this scene.

The anger and desolateness that all of them had experienced were all let out; they needed a victory to rebuild their confidence in the sect.

"Good!"

Fang Yuan clapped his hands.

It was extremely favourable to the opponent. Even if Gui Wuhun was facing off a [Martial Artist (9th Gate)], he might be able to defeat him and claim victory.

But Fang Yuan was different!

He was never close to a [Martial Artist (9th Gate)], and would only disappoint Gui Wuhun.

"What's wrong?"

Gui Wuhun adopted his stance but realised that the young man did not move at all, which made him doubtful.

By allowing his opponent to focus his strength, Fang Yuan was either a fool or extremely confident!

Just this simple thought made Gui Wuhun feel uneasy.

Even a 4 Heavenly Gate martial artist would respond!

"He!"

He had no means to escape!

As his energy was focused to the limits, he could feel his veins almost exploding with energy. Gui Wuhun struck out his palm, forming a ghastly shadow towards Fang Yuan!

"Five Yin Hand!"

Gui Wuhun pushed his Xuan Yin Heart Technique to its limits, stretched his arm out and struck his claw down, disrupting the Yin energy as a swirl appeared in the middle of his palm.

This claw focused all the strength he could have ever mustered in his entire life. The moment he struck out, he had the mentality of 'this would be the strongest claw I could have ever struck in my lifetime'.

Not just the Five Ghosts Sect disciples, but the surrounding martial artists were all in awe. Even Wang Fuhui slowed down and took a glance at the fight.

"Kacha!"

A shadow flashed by, bringing with it wind and sand.

As the fight was about to reach the climax, the layer of energy surrounding the both of them disappeared, revealing the normal ground.

Fang Yuan remained composed and stood still.

Gui Wuhun maintained his stance. He struck at a small pit on the ground, and his face went pale.

"Grandfather Wuhun!"

The small girl shrugged away and ran into the middle of the battlefield, with tears in her eyes. "Stop fighting!"

"Pu!"

Seeing the small girl running towards him, Gui Wusheng spat out another mouth of blood.

"Elder?"

The Five Ghosts Sect disciples rushed towards him.

How did the godly Gui Wusheng lose?

Not just by one move, but mysteriously as well, confusing them.

"No worries... Just some blood clots, I will be much better after spitting it out!"

Gui Wuhun pulled the little girl towards him and became serious. Suddenly, he greeted Fang Yuan and bowed. "Are you Sect Master Fang from Qinghe County, secluded valley?"

He could not think of another Wu Zong as young as him.

His heart was bitter.

If he knew who Fang Yuan was from the beginning, he would not have initiated the fight from the start.

"Fang Yuan?"

"Qinghe Doctor?"

"Sect Master of two sects?"

"Such a young man, making everybody else ashamed of themselves!"

...

A person's name was like a tree's shadow.

Everyone knew of Fang Yuan's name in the entire Secluded Mountain Prefecture.

But not everyone saw him in person before, which led to this fight.

"That is me. Do you have anything else to say, Gui Wuhun?"

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

"Haha..."

Among the crowd, Wang Fugui laughed hysterically, looked at Fang Yuan, and boasted quietly. "Did you see that... that is my brother! I've seen his potential the first time we met, and we have become sworn brothers since..."

"You are wise!"

Suddenly, they seemed to look up to Wang Fugui.

...

"Since sect master is here personally, what else can I say? The Five Ghost Sect is at your disposal!"

Gui Wuhun gave in and used his strict face to stop those disciples who were still angry.

He knew that if he did not make the correct decision, Fang Yuan could easily wipe out the entire Five Ghosts Sect.

This was all the sect had left, so how could he let everything here be wiped out?

"Very well!"

Fang Yuan approached the entrance of the martial arts centre. "Give me all your secret records. I will stay here for a few days!"

"We will accede to your request!"

Gui Wuhun bowed. "Let out the finest room in our centre for Sect Master Fang to rest... All our disciples will have to greet Sect Master Fang from now onwards, and are to be respectful towards

him!"

"..."

There was silence among the Five Ghosts Sect disciples. A moment ago there were angry and were not willing to give in, and now there were expected to become obedient servants. It was really a test of their minds.

A few who adapted quickly already started to fawn upon Fang Yuan. "It is our Sect's honour for Sect Master Fang to see our secret collection. Please enter and enjoy some tea!"

"Mm..."

Fang Yuan gave Wang Fugui a 'Do anything you please' look, and entered the martial arts centre.

Gui Wuhun followed him closely, carrying the little girl and looking troubled.

"This girl... What's her name?"

Fang Yuan asked as he continued walking.

"This..."

Gui Wuhun hesitated for a moment, then replied. "He name is Little Xia, the daughter of my friend!"

"Indeed a friend!"

Fang Yuan turned around, looked at Gui Wuhun, and remained silent.

The energy of this little girl reminded him of the Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master.

Never would he have thought that such a rough brute could have such a cute and delicate daughter.

Furthermore, there seemed to be an unknown secret in the Five Ghosts Sect.

The other disciples seemed to be clueless about it.

...

"Master?"

Outside the martial arts centre, the other martial artists have dispersed, leaving Wang Fugui and company behind.

"Why did the sect master enter and leave us here?"

"Did we not come here to destroy their place? Why did it become like this?"

They were all clueless and looked at one another. They all had the same thought. "Did master anger Fang Yuan?"

Wang Fugui was sorrowful, and his heart was pounding.

He forced himself to look composed. "Brother... He has his own ways of doing things, what do you guys know about? Hurry up and follow me to destroy the Big River Faction!"

His confusing words indeed confused them, as though he meant that 'there is someone above us'. All of them straightened their backs and followed Wang Fugui with much pride, as they made their way to destroy the Big River Faction.

Chapter 139: The Secret Mansion

"So I see, it's the Xuan Yin Heart Technique!"

Back in the temporary headquarters of the Five Ghosts Sect.

Since Fang Yuan had displayed exemplary martial art, all his requests were strictly acceded to by Gui Wuhun. Even if Fang Yuan had wanted to know the last mystery behind the technique, Gui Wuhun didn't dare to disobey.

"Previously, the Xuan Yin Heart Technique from Elder Han only comprises of the 12 Gates and the method to break through Wu Zong. However, that was not the real version.....The secret was only made known to the oldest sect master and the inherited elder."

When Fang Yuan had taken the Xuan Yin Heart Technique from Elder Han, Fang Yuan didn't trust him and even found some problems with this technique when he was practising it in the dream world. It looked like he was correct about the defect of the technique.

"After the 4 Heavenly Gates, the version of the Xuan Yin Heart Technique I have with me is different from the real one. The version I have is evil in nature and.....the Miniature Elemental Force I have trained will be restrained when it meets the real version. This is a secret method used by the Five Ghosts Sect to control many elders and disciples!"

The real version of the technique was passed down by ear and mouth.

Luckily, Gui Wuhun was the elder who had inherited it and Fang Yuan was then able to get the mystery behind this technique.

"This technique should not be called the Xuan Yin Heart Technique, it should be renamed as.....Xuan Yin Body Refining Spell! A martial artist who has reached the peak of the 12th Gate

can use this spell to refine his or her body to become the Xuan Yin Metal Body. The power obtained will be similar to a Wu Zong with elemental force!"

Of course, the Five Ghosts Sect didn't have any martial artists who were at the peak of the 12th Gate previously. Or else, the situation would have been different if there was a Xuan Yin Metal Body cultivated by the Five Ghosts Sect.

"This martial art.....is a type of spiritual spell previously. It is then changed by someone into a heart technique and the person has managed to design such a marvellous control technique. That person is indeed a talented one!"

After pondering for quite a while, Fang Yuan sighed.

Luckily he avoided the evil pathway even though he had read through the content regarding the Xuan Yin Body Refining Spell. He had pushed for the strengthening of his Yin from his Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique and managed to avoid that dangerous stage.

Currently, as he had gotten the full inherited copy of the Xuan Yin Body Refining Spell, with the exception of perfecting his Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique with a few spiritual spells, there was no other use to it.

However, the Five Ghost Sect Sect Master's recordings and notes which were kept by the inherited elder shocked Fang Yuan a little.

"From the description, his ancestor has great magical power....."

Fang Yuan read one of the pages and shook his head.

Even though the recordings were recorded based on someone else's account and there could be some mistakes here and there, most of the content should be accurate.

"It was said that this ancestor had such great magical powers that the techniques he had passed on were shocking. The requirements were very high and even his three greatest disciples were not able

to fully inherit them. As time passed, the techniques were lost but the Xuan Yin Body Refining Spell became well known and that was what made the Five Ghosts Sect special!"

"Unfortunately, there were originally 3 pieces of treasure maps. 2 of them are in the Xia Country and had been taken away by the Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master. The last one was missing and had probably ended up in a foreign country already....."

Fang Yuan rubbed his forehead as he had a little headache.

If the last piece was in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture or even somewhere in the Xia Country, there was still hope even though it would be very hard to find the last piece. Anyway, he wouldn't have to look for it personally as he had his men to do it.

However, if the last piece really ended up in the hands of a foreign power, the consequences would be very serious.

"Hoo....."

As he placed the last scroll back onto the bookshelf, Fang Yuan got up and stretched himself. "Maybe I should put that matter aside first and focus on Lu Renjia's secret mansion....."

He was looking forward to examine the condition of the place that alchemy master was living in.

Fang Yuan was currently in a small room with the doors shut. No light could enter the room and the only light source was from the table lamp.

In the whole of the martial arts centre, this place was guarded the heaviest. After all, the last inheritance of the Five Ghosts Sect was stored here.

"Did you manage to find anything, Sir?"

At that moment, when Fang Yuan walked out of the study room, he met Elder Gui Wuhun who asked him with much respect.

"I did!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

"We are honoured to have been able to help you!"

Gui Wuhun smiled till his eyebrows were almost joined together like an old chrysanthemum and continued, "The governor of Lieyang County know that you are here and he is here to visit you. He is waiting in the guest hall....."

He looked at Fang Yuan with a look of anticipation.

If Fang Yuan had followed his own intention, he would have rejected to see the governor.

However, since he had just troubled Gui Wuhun to look through the secret manuals and now Gui Wuhun only needed him to show his face to the governor, this was just a small request and Fang Yuan felt that it was rude to reject. Hence, he replied, "No problem, please lead the way!"

"Yes, Sir!"

Gui Wuhun was overjoyed.

He was old and experienced. Hence, he knew how influential the governor of Lieyang County was, but he had the intention to sow discord. Without hesitation, he wanted to help the sect to establish a good rapport with Fang Yuan.

Also, Fang Yuan was already right at the doorstep.

With the current position Fang Yuan had in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, Fang Yuan would not have to say a word. With him, the life of the Five Ghosts Sect in Lieyang County would be way better than before.

.....

Three days later, in the Melting Sun Peak.

This place was the most famous landmark in the Lieyang County, but the name sounded fierce!

The Melting Sun Peak was filled with fire. Hence, within the 6300-yard radius, there were no plants grown there.

Also, the fire gave out poisonous gas and normal human beings would die from breathing in the gas!

Hence, this place was very good for mining but not many dared to risk their lives to come here and mine. The place was therefore kept in its original state.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

At that moment, a shadow of a black eagle was hovering over the Melting Sun Peak and was letting out a high-pitched chirp.

"Keep going, don't stop!"

On the back of the eagle, there was a person and it was Fang Yuan, who had come here to look for the secret mansion of Lu Renjia!

He rode the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and circled around the vicinity for a few times. His eyes then glittered. "This is the place. Land there!"

"Chirp!"

The eagle flapped its wings and a big gust of wind blew away the poisonous gas.

Even if the poisonous gas was 10 times stronger, the gas would not be able to poison Fang Yuan and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"Lu Renjia had been travelling a lot since young and had stayed in Lieyang County for quite some time already. He even managed to build a secret mansion just in case he was in trouble....Unfortunately, it was useless!"

Fang Yuan, who had managed to obtain the memory from Ling Yin, had no difficulty in locating the secret mansion.

He would reach the mansion after passing by a giant lava lake.

"According to the map, at the edge of the lake, the entrance to the mansion will be right above the wall of a cliff....."

Fang Yuan found the cliff and touched it.

The rock here felt different from those elsewhere. The rock here was a little warm.

Also, there was the presence of vegetation here.

There were vines that were red in colour and were very tough. The vines had sharp thorns and they grew over half of the wall of the cliff. It looked scary to many people.

"This place is really well hidden!"

As he released some of his magical energy, he didn't manage to find anything. Fang Yuan then knew that Lu Renjia had an extra setup. He then sighed lightly. His foot tapped on the raised rocks lightly and his whole body rose like a cloud.

His lightness skill was very good and he was able to jump up by a few yards to the middle section of the cliff.

"3 pieces of raised rock to form a finished shape. This is the place!"

When he saw the exact symbol here, which was like the one in the secret manual, he felt happy and grabbed the wall with his fingers.

"Chi! Chi!"

How powerful was his Eagle Claw Technique? These vines were very sharp, but with his fingers slaying through, the vines then broke and a small platform was revealed.

The platform was very small and could only fit one person.

Fang Yuan went on top and saw a red coloured moss above the cliff. It looked strange and Fang Yuan went up to have a look. However, he couldn't find anything useful and it was as if he had been obstructed.

"Good stuff!"

His eyes glittered and said, "Even though this moss is not really spiritual in nature, it was special still. I'm not sure whether this can be relocated to somewhere else...."

Such spiritual object was grown here likely because of the unique environment. Even though Fang Yuan had the intention to relocate this plant, he had no confidence in doing so.

Then, there was an echo after he hit the wall of the cliff. He figured out for a while and managed to find the mechanism behind it.

"Kacha!"

With a loud noise, the dust from the rocks came down and the wall, which was right in front of Fang Yuan, had started to move and it revealed a tunnel. The end of the tunnel seemed to have a red light shining brightly.

"Hoo! Hoo!"

A light breeze came through the tunnel and the ventilation of the air suggested that there were other tunnels connected as well. There was no bad air.

"Interesting! This is interesting!"

Fang Yuan was bold. Plus, this place was built as a backup place for Lu Renjia, hence it would not be built in such a way that would endanger the lives of Lu Renjia himself and his disciples. Hence, the place was not dangerous and Fang Yuan went straight in.

Not long after, he reached the end of the tunnel and there was a strange alchemy room right in front of Fang Yuan.

"This is....."

What he saw was a cave that was not small. Beside the cave, there was a small magma lake and it was boiling hot.

In the magma, there was a huge alchemy furnace and the surface

of it had many lines. The material of it seemed to be gold or rock and the colour was dull. There were many red lines moving vibrating as well.

"An alchemy furnace that is using the underground fire? This is indeed a good place to practise alchemy!"

Fang Yuan sighed upon seeing that.

If this room was discovered by Huang Fu Renhe, he would probably not leave this room ever once he entered it.

After all, when one is practising alchemy, it would be much more convenient with the help of the underground fire.

Other than the alchemy furnace, there were a few cupboards beside the cave and they were metallic. The jade bottles that were placed in these cupboards would bring coldness to whoever who touched them.

"If one wants to store the medicinal pills here, the pills will need to be stored in a special place. This person is indeed rich as he is using Cold Jade Bottles to store the pills....."

Fang Yuan sighed with envy and now he knew how rich this alchemy master was.

He was very happy as he counted the number of things he could get this time that were of great value.

Chapter 140: Level 5

"Elemental Gaining Pill, A pill to replenish elemental force and strengthen the body..."

"Calming Pill, to clear one's mind and be at peace..."

"Muscle Building Pill, bones and muscles will heal wounds within seven days..."

The entire shelf was filled with jade bottles, and beneath every bottle, there was a label describing the pill's name and usage, which overwhelmed Fang Yuan with information.

For Lu Renjia to keep all these here, they must all be spiritual pills made from spiritual ingredients, and all had spiritual abilities.

Normal martial artists would fight to their deaths just to get their hands on any one of these pills.

Of course, at his level, not many spiritual pills would have an effect on him.

Fang Yuan scavenged the shelves, and could only find 3 bottles which might be useful to him.

"There are 10 pills in the bottle of Elemental Gaining Pill, 5 pills in the bottle of Calming Pill, and 18 pills in the Muscle Building Pill!"

Fang Yuan tossed the bottle in his hand. "There are only two types of pills here which will aid my cultivation, I wonder if I will improve in my cultivation after swallowing all of it at once?"

Thinking about how Liu Yan took over half of Lu Renjia's assets and used them to break through to his current state of cultivation, Fang Yuan wanted to try it out as well.

"The wealth of an alchemy master is ridiculous..."

After accounting his pills, Fang Yuan let out a long sigh and as he admired Lu Renjia's assets.

Of course, not all the pills on the shelf were spiritual pills. Half of them were normal ingredients, water and some money.

When Lu Renjia was preparing this secret mansion, he had already thought of all the circumstances in which he would come here to hide, and therefore prepared for it already.

"There are about 10,000 taels of silver here. Including the valuable resources here, he can get back on his feet wherever he might run to..."

Fang Yuan flipped the bottom of the shelf and dragged out two large jade boxes.

Opening one of them revealed a purple animal hide, with purple scales as large as eyes, glittering. It would strike fear in whoever laid their eyes on it."

"High-grade spiritual beast's hide?"

He touched his chin and tried to feel the energy from the beast's hide. "I'm afraid the animal is of Wu Zong level when it was alive!"

It was not easy to tame a spiritual beast.

It was even more so for a spiritual beast of Wu Zong level. Even if Lu Renjia personally tried, he could only get some valuable ingredients from it.

However, it was still an extremely valuable item.

Fang Yuan held the hide in his hands, pulled it and was rather satisfied with its hardness. If he directly wore it over his body like a cape, it would still be stronger than any normal armour, and might even have a considerable defence against spiritual spells.

"A pity I am not an alchemy master. Otherwise, I will be able to use it as a material to make a strong armour... By keeping this, Lu Renjia should also have the same intention..."

After much thought, Fang Yuan opened the second jade box.

At that moment, his eyes were filled with a baby green colour.

In such a big jade box, half of it was filled with crystal clear liquid, like liquid lead and mercury. There was a green glitter from the middle, as though it had a mind of its own.

"Spiritual seed?"

Fang Yuan carefully removed the green colour from the middle and realised that it was a green crystal. In the middle of the green crystal was a jet-black seed that was not obvious to the naked eye. The green glitter seemed to have seeped out from the crystal.

"This crystal is a form of seal, and together with the liquid, is able to preserve the life of any plant..."

Fang Yuan made a guess and explained to himself.

Like the jade bottles, there was a description under both jade boxes; they seemed to have been prepared for Ling Yin.

"Star-eyed Leopard hide... Who knew that such treasures exist in Xia Country, and where did Lu Renjia find this?"

Lu Renjia directly described the origins of the purple hide. It was from a treasured mutated beast and was a good material for armours. It had increased defence capabilities against spiritual spells.

As for the other jade box, the origins of the spiritual seed was not as clear. The only thing mentioned was that this unknown spiritual seed had a strong will to live, but a pity that it was hard for it to germinate.

"Spiritual seed?"

Fang Yuan sighed. "Only one such seed and it is able to display so many traits, could it be from the Heavens?"

Spiritual objects were classified into the four grades namely Heaven Grade, Earth Grade, Mystery Grade and Yellow Grade. It was easy to obtain spiritual objects of Mystery Grade and Yellow Grade, but it all depended on luck for one to find a Heaven Grade

or Earth Grade spiritual object. In the history of Xia country, these spiritual objects only appear once in a few hundred years, and are nicknamed the deity plants!

Maybe spiritual plants of Heaven Grade only appeared in the Da Qian Empire.

"Eh?"

Suddenly Fang Yuan's expression changed!

This was because the green-glowing crystal in his hands suddenly flashed, and as the liquid inside it started to swirl, it appeared as though it was about to melt.

"How is this possible... Why is the seal melting so quickly?"

Fang Yuan frowned. He noticed the normal-looking seed within it started to glow yellow, and he could feel energy emitting from it.

"This is..."

He was familiar with this scene. Regardless if it was his first time planting the Vermilion Jade Rice, or the germination of the Vermilion Fruit, this yellow glow would always appear as the breakthrough for his [Botany]!

"It is indeed you..."

Fang Yuan brought his stats window out and noticed that the '4' behind his fully filled experience bar jumped. It broke through the bottleneck and became Level 5!

[Botany (Level 5)]!

"Even though it did not germinate, I could still experience a breakthrough in my [Botany] just by coming in contact with its energy?"

Fang Yuan looked at the seed which appeared normal once again, shocked. "This is not possible if it is an Earth Grade seed... Could it be... Heaven Grade? How did this treasure lie in Lu Renjia's hands?"

It was a pity that he did not have the chance to access Lu Renjia's dream to unveil this secret.

Based on his prediction, Lu Renjia only knew that this seed was valuable, but did not know its real value!

"Value!"

After recovering from his shock, Fang Yuan was overjoyed. "With the breakthrough in my [Botany], even if I get nothing from this journey, it would still be worth it!"

He only said this after noticing the description of his [Botany (Level 5)]:

"[Botany (Level 5)] - You are a grandmaster in the world of botany! All plants that go through your hands will evolve special traits, and their maturity period will also be shortened!"

This ability of his was rather god-like.

After this tip, Fang Yuan immediately thought of the Vermilion Fruit back at home.

With spiritual fertilizer, spiritual land and his own abilities, it was possible to mature the Vermilion Fruit's shoot.

"Great, this is great!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head, and looked at his stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 11

Spirit: 11

Magic: 9.5

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Dream-Building Master (High Elemental Gathering Stage)], Wu Zong

Technique: [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 13) (???)],

Ecstasy Spell, Shadowstep

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

Consuming the Flame Jade Rice, cultivating the way of a dream master and this breakthrough now all led to the big change in his stats window.

"In the future, Xia Country will be in a mess. To hold my ground, I need to have real strength and ability!"

Fang Yuan clenched his fist, full of anticipation.

...

Summer Sun Prefecture.

As Fang Yuan was visiting Lu Renjia's secret mansion, a devastating thing happened in Summer Sun Prefecture.

Because of complacency, the Summer Sun Prefecture's three cities were invaded in one day as the Prefecture Master's power was at stake.

The sunset was red as blood.

In a faraway city, there was chaos as people were fighting.

Waves of uniformed Secluded Mountain Prefecture soldiers were killing their way in but were made to halt by the arrow rain, which made them eventually retreat back embarrassingly.

"Prefecture Master!"

In front of the capital leaders, Xiang Zilong's eyes were bloodshot as he kneeled in front of Liu Yan. "Why not take a rest here for the night! We can surely take down Huangshi City tomorrow!"

"Hmph, a bunch of useless fools!"

Liu Yan was clad in golden armour as he witnessed the Secluded Mountain Prefecture soldiers being pierced by the arrows, as he exclaimed.

"I made an effort to leave the inexperienced soldiers to defend at

the counties, and brought the experienced once here, and yet we still need so much effort to invade a district town!"

His eyebrows were twitching, showing his anger.

"A Wu Zong is now in charge of Huangshi City, and is therefore different from last time! Furthermore... Our troops have taken down three cities already, and are all worn out... I deserve to die!"

Xiang Zilong tried to explain, and as he looked at Liu Yan's eye, he shivered and apologised.

"Keke... Don't worry, Prefecture Master!"

Taoist Mu Li, who was at one side, chuckled. "Our army is tired, and the enemy's arrows are almost used up. Later, I shall aid our soldiers to take down this city!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

After finishing his sentence, he leapt on the Wind Chasing Falcon and disappeared.

Not long after, a green spiritual light appeared from the city walls, accompanying a certain Wu Zong's rage.

Seeing this opportunity, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture soldiers tried to attack once more and finally opened the city gates. Everyone squeezed in and brought the fight to the alleys.

"Very well, since the enemy is stupid, pass the order down to burn down the entire city!"

Liu Yan witnessed this scene and passed down the order.

"What?"

Xiang Zilong was shocked. "Prefecture Master, please reconsider. The common people are innocent..."

"Hmph! This entire city's people are all rebels and are against me, and I shall treat all of them the same!"

Liu Yan snickered. "If I don't do this, how do I strike fear in the

enemy? I am decided, so stop trying to make me reconsider!"

He not only ordered to burn the city but also personally joined in. In the city, the nine green fire dragons were flying about, and thick smoke filled the sky; the entire city became hell.

"If you hate me, come fight me!"

Seeing the entire city becoming like hell, Liu Yan remained emotionless. He held a blood-coloured jade in his right hand. "For me to break through, this sin is nothing!"

Chapter 141: Twist

In the beginning of the new year, Liu Yan from the Secluded Mountain Prefecture attacked Summer Sun Prefecture. In just half a month, he had managed to take down 15 cities and had caused 8 cities to be burning in fire. The casualties rate was very high and the whole of Xia Country was horrified by this!

The Summer Sun Prefecture Armed Forces had lost the battle and the Prefecture master had no choice but to abandon the Prefecture City. He then went to ask for help from the Clear Spring Prefecture, the royal family of the Xia Country or anyone who had the ability to do so.

On the 15th day of the 4th month, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Forces had surrounded the whole of Summer Sun Prefecture City and a big battle started.

It was dawn.

Above the city wall of the Summer Sun Prefecture, there were many cultivators getting up onto the city building to observe the movement of the enemy.

"Zhe! Zhe!"

A scholar who was dressed in green then sighed and said, "Every order will be executed. The soldiers train daily and there is even a special way for them to set up the tents.....They are a group of powerful soldiers indeed!"

"Humph, my Summer Sun Elite Forces is not any inferior to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. That Old Liu Yan is very experienced in martial arts and there are Mu Li and Xiang Zilong assisting him!"

The Summer Sun Prefecture Master who was beside the scribe was pulling a long face.

The scribe, who had made that comment previously, was the

Clear Spring Prefecture Master. Even though both positions were of the same level, the Clear Spring Prefecture Master didn't say anything that was hurting as he had travelled all the way here to help the Summer Sun Prefecture.

"Well said!"

The scribe laughed and didn't refute. "Even though the strength of my armed forces has increased, I only have about 50,000 soldiers and another 20,000 soldiers as reserves. With your ability, Summer Prefecture Master, we will have a chance!"

"I'm not afraid of wars, but Liu Yan doesn't play this war the proper way. He is a spiritual knight and went off many times. What can we do?"

The Summer Sun Prefecture Master sighed.

"If that is the case, why do you still need my help?"

The scribe dressed in green then laughed and continued, "Liu Yan is overboard this time!"

From the way they looked, Liu Yan had actually broken the rules of the protocol between Wu Zong and spiritual knights.

Nevermind if he was insatiable and felt like attacking others. He actually used his role as a spiritual knight to sabotage others and caused others to lose their faces. Hence, there would be a loss of interests. If one would provoke a spiritual knight and that spiritual knight had found ways to attack one's sovereign even though he cannot defeat that one, the actions of the spiritual knight would be considered evil.

Liu Yan was the initiator of this war and hence he deserved a beating.

"The royal family has stated that they fully support our Prefecture in this attack, but they haven't sent any actual help....."

The Summer Sun Prefecture Master gave a cold laugh and said,

"Looks like after this war, we will not only have to change the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master, the royal family will also have to be...Hehe..."

"Indeed....there are many movements from the royal family recently!"

As the scribe heard this, his eyebrows moved as well.

Even though there was chaos in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, the royal family had reached out too much and this was also a problem for those few prefectures. Also, there were a few traces left behind.....

If not for the pressing issue of Liu Yan, the Clear Spring Prefecture Master would have to ask for an explanation from the royal family with another ally already.

In the past, the 3 prefectures had got together to create troubles for the royal family for a few times.

The final outcome was that the royal family could only incur the losses without saying anything and the royal family even lost a king. Hence, the royal family was back into its original position and had to take care of the losses it had incurred.

Even though the situation was different this time, the outcome would still be the same.

The Clear Spring Prefecture Master was very confident of this.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

At that moment, there was a long chirp and a black shadow came from the enemy's side. There was a person on top and the person looked violent and tough. Who else could the person be other than Liu Yan himself?

"Xiao Yunqing, Lan Xiaosheng!"

Seeing that the two prefecture masters were here, Liu Yan felt even more excited and said, "You both are here? Very good! I can

just remove you two at one go and there will be no need for the extra effort to remove separately!"

"Old Liu, your words are aggressive!"

Lan Xiaosheng focused on Liu Yan. Even though his mouth was not wide open, his voice was able to travel through the clouds.

"Roar! Roar!"

There was a furious roar coming from the city and a giant black shadow flew above the city wall. It spread its wings and flew into the sky.

The black shadow felt like a dragon and a tiger at the same time!

It had the look of a big tiger, but it had wings and was very energetic.

It is a special tiger with wings!

The tiger was the White Winged Tiger! It was a tamed spiritual beast from the Clear Spring Prefecture. It not only was able to fly, its body was tough like metal and it could fight against a [Martial Artist (11th Gate)]!

"Let's go!"

Xia Yunqing and Lan Xiaosheng leapt lightly onto the back of the White Tiger. Lan Xiaosheng looked at the lonely Liu Yan and laughed. "I'm impressed that you dare to fight against us even though you are alone. Where are your 3 leaders, the spiritual knight and the young sect master?"

"I alone am sufficient enough to defeat you two!"

Even though the two prefecture masters right in front of Liu Yan were also great spiritual knights, Liu Yan was very confident and treated the two of them as though they were dead already!

Such attitude made the two prefecture masters even more furious.

"Good! Very good! Looks like you are powerful enough to defeat the two of us on your own. How can we reject this?"

Xia Yunqing gave a long laugh and was feeling excited.

From the way he looked, it would be hard for Liu Yan to defeat the two of them on his own if he had not reached the Elemental Opening Realm!

This was the best time to end the war as Liu Yan was on his own.

He turned his head and saw that Lan Xiaosheng also had the same look as him. Both couldn't wait to defeat Liu Yan.

Both of them looked at each other and as the White Winged Tiger gave a loud roar, it pounced in the direction of where Liu Yan was...

.....

Just when the 3 prefecture masters were fighting.

Back in the capital of the Xia Country.

The Xia Country was split into 3 prefectures. Most of the land was controlled by the respective prefectures and there was a small portion of land that was still controlled by the royal family. At least it showed that the royal family still had some sort of power in this country.

The capital laid at the intersection of the 3 prefectures and there were no walls built around the capital city!

It was said that it was decided to be like this when the 3 prefecture masters were chosen. However, this clearly showed that the royal family of the Xia Country had to be a puppet forever and couldn't go against anyone who had great power.

Since there was no wall surrounding the capital city, there were enemies in all directions and the city was prone to many threats. The royal family had also become weak.

If not for the survival of the king's heritage and the restraint of

the 3 Prefecture masters, the whole of Xia Country would have probably been exterminated.

"So how is it, Princess?"

Back in a tall building in the royal palace, tea was served to Xie Lingyun who had just returned from her trip as an ambassador. Her expression was confused and she was facing a white-haired energetic old daoist.

"Even though Liu Yan is frenzied and has created trouble for the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, the matter is still related to Xia Country. The two prefecture masters of the Summer Sun and Clear Spring are both loyal ministers and how can we let Gui Country handle this matter for us?"

Plus.....I'm just a lady and you, the ambassador from the Gui Country has looked for the wrong person!"

Xie Lingyun said confidently, "I should look for Father to discuss this matter!"

"Hehe....Miss Xie, why do you have to hide from me? Miss Xie, your power is considered to be great in this country! In fact, the king from my home country is also impressed with your methods of handling the matter!"

The old daoist shook his head and seemed to have known some secrets.

"What are you talking about?"

Xie Lingyun's expression changed.

"I'm not speaking nonsense. Your methods are special. In just a short period of time, you are able to rapport the support of a spiritual knight and a Wu Zong. This is incredible!"

The old daoist laughed and said.

As he spoke, Xie Lingyun's energy was being shocked a little and she couldn't regulate her energy, which caused her face's colour to

be changing.

"Wu Zong is here. You don't need me to point out where the spiritual knight is, do you?"

The old daoist looked into Xie Lingyun's eyes intensely as if he wanted to know what she was thinking.

"Just tell me, what are you going to do now?"

Xie Lingyun took a deep breath and her expression changed.

If Fang Yuan was here, he would be surprised by her change in expressions.

Xie Lingyun was standing straight with much confidence and she looked like a commander who had no miscalculations.

"I have said before. The king from my home country is willing to help you. However, after everything is settled, please give a portion of the Secluded Mountains as a reward to the king....and you two can get married. The king has been admiring you for a long time already....."

The old daoist shook his head when he said that to Xie Lingyun.

As she heard this, she laughed and suddenly gave a cold look. "The king of the Gui Country is indeed asking for a lot from me, I will have to reject his offer!"

"You don't have to reject this offer straight away!"

The old daoist continued with much confidence, "Your plan of interlocking the attacks is indeed great and you even placed a mole by Liu Yan's side. However, you have overlooked something!"

"Lu Renjia?!"

Xie Lingyun was able to what was it on the spot and she was surprised. "I was already guessing that Lu Renjia had something to do with the foreign power. So it was you people!"

"We only put a little trick there and we didn't expect to reap

anything from it!"

The old daoist stroked his beard and continued arrogantly, "I see that you have known quite a lot of things from Lu Renjia and that include one secret method....."

"Is it regarding the method of using high-quality spiritual objects to break through the bottleneck?"

Xie Lingyun interrupted him and gave him a mocking look.

"So princess, you also know that. You are indeed special....."

The old daoist was a little surprised but was still full of confidence. "What I want to mention is the other manual. The manual is dedicated to Blood Demon and one could use a normal person's blood to recover one's elemental force! This method is called the Blood Refining Technique. This technique could cause a lot of damage as it requires the blood of thousands of people to produce its effect. Also, one could be affected mentally if one executes this technique!"

"Blood Refining? Blood Refining!"

Xie Lingyun was shocked and her nails were gripping onto something unknowingly. "The Huangshi City is being burnt?"

"Correct, we have sent our men to have a look and indeed, there is a possibility that many people are already the victims of this technique.....However, Liu Yan was smart and he burnt the whole city straight away to remove any traces and evidence."

The old daoist gave a weird smile and continued, "I guess you will know whether is it real or fake very soon!"

"Princess!"

At that moment, there were a few rapid knocks on the door. Then, a servant rushed in and was looking very anxious. "Breaking news from the Summer Sun Prefecture! Liu Yan has managed to defeat the other two prefecture masters. He has killed Xia Yunqing

while Lan Xiaosheng, who was seriously injured, has escaped. The Summer Sun Prefecture.....has been taken down!"

"What!?"

Xie Lingyun's expression instantly changed.

Chapter 142: Shi Yutong's Dream

End of the fifth month.

Accompanying the Summer Sun Prefecture Master's death, and the escape of the Clear Spring Prefecture Master's death, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture's soldiers occupied the entire Summer Sun Prefecture and seemed to be targeting the Imperial City next.

In a short while, Liu Yan's influence grew exponentially and was known as the number one spiritual knight, his infamous name spreading throughout the country.

"Xia Yunqing is dead? Lan Xiaosheng has escaped with injuries?"

As he returned to Qinghe County, Fang Yuan received this news and was in disbelief.

"Impossible! This would only be possible if Liu Yan is in the Elemental Opening Realm! If he was still in the Elemental Gathering Realm, he would be no match against two opponents the same level as him... Unless..."

Fang Yuan sighed and looked at Zhou Wenwu. "Any other details?"

"Reporting!"

Zhou Wenwu bowed. "From our sources, the three Prefecture Masters fought with extreme intensity, especially when Liu Yan struck, the fire burnt the clouds in the sky, making the entire sky a crimson red like it was on fire..."

"After that, Prefecture Master Liu took over Summer Sun Prefecture and gathered the Wu Zongs and spiritual knights within the prefecture to swear their loyalty to him. If they did not do so, they would be severely dealt with!"

At this point, he looked stressed out. "Sir, what should I do?"

"A cloud burnt by fire?"

Fang Yuan twitched his eyebrows. "This is a little weird..."

Based on his knowledge, Liu Yan's spiritual fire was green.

Of course, this was a small detail. The important thing was that Liu Yan had a resounding victory. Why did he not continue and take over the Imperial City and become king, but gather the heroes and martial artists in Summer Sun Prefecture?

'Could it be... that he had not entered the Elemental Opening Realm and only won because he used other improper means... By now he should have run out of energy...'

Fang Yuan was deep in thought, and as he glanced at his worried subordinates, he chuckled. "If anything happens, we'll react to it accordingly. Since Prefecture Master has invited me, I will go..."

After all, the takeover of Summer Sun Prefecture would mean that Liu Yan had gotten his hands on their valuables and treasures. He did not know if he could forcefully achieve a breakthrough, and was rather curious about this.

'Of course, before all this, I should focus on my own cultivation!'

After dismissing his subordinates, Fang Yuan arrived at the meditation room, crossed his legs and sat down. With a flip of his palm, an Elemental Gaining Pill looted from Lu Renjia's secret mansion appeared.

"The medicinal properties of a spiritual pill is extremely strong, and cannot be compared to spiritual rice, which can be consumed daily. However, I still can use it to increase my cultivation once in a while!"

Fang Yuan mulled. "I have already tested these few bottles of spiritual pills on others, and their effects are indeed remarkable, with no side effects, and it should be safe for me to try it... Who would have thought that I will end up taking spiritual pills to aid in my cultivation?"

Without hesitation, his eyes flashed as he popped on Elemental Gaining Pill into his mouth. He shut his eyes as he allowed the pill to take its effect.

Fang Yuan was extremely experienced in taking spiritual objects, but this was his first attempt at taking a spiritual pill.

As the pill entered his stomach, it was a different feeling altogether.

A strong and steady spiritual force was felt, like an awakening dragon swirling within him. His muscles expanded and he felt like his skin was being stretched.

'This spiritual pill is still much stronger than spiritual rice in terms of medicinal properties!'

This spiritual pill was made from the essence of spiritual objects, and therefore should not be compared to a normal spiritual plant.

Based on Fang Yuan's estimation, the spiritual force from one of this pill would be akin to eating 66 pounds of spiritual rice! This was the speciality of an alchemy master.

After a long while, Fang Yuan opened his eyes.

"The Wu Zong elemental force within my Dantian is indeed stronger, what a pity it cannot go any further..."

Feeling the progress in his cultivation, he twitched his eyebrows. "However, there is still little growth in my dream elemental force. It is still stagnant as before, and it seems that it can only be cultivated through dream accessing and dream building!"

As he thought to this point, he used his magical energy to scan through his entire body, and his expression changed again. "Although the spiritual pill is remarkable, there is still the fear of pill poisoning and the problem of increasing dependence on it... However, I still don't have the luxury of having one spiritual pill each day, and that a high-levelled alchemy master made use of nature to produce this spiritual pill, which means that it should

not be poisonous..."

...

There was no higher attainment for a Wu Zong, and therefore it did not matter how much more the elemental force was being developed.

Fang Yuan stopped taking the Elemental Gaining Pill as he turned his focus on the Calming Pill.

He first targeted Ling Yin.

This girl was a spiritual disciple and was equivalent to a [Martial Artist (11th Gate)]. However, as of now, she was exhausted by Fang Yuan and was almost on the verge of mentally breaking down.

If Fang Yuan was interested, he could change the mindset of this lady and could make her a loyal servant.

Ultimately, he was not an evil person and did not have the ill intention to change her memory drastically. He only wanted to correct the hostility towards him in her subconscious mind. For instance, he could retarget her hatred onto Liu Yan, before slowly making her loyal to himself.

In the cell, within the Ecstasy Fog, Ling Yin was sleeping soundly and appeared naive.

"A good dream!"

After he made a slight amendment to her memory, Fang Yuan stood up and left the cell.

Changing someone else's memory was a huge process. Even though it was just a minute change, the process could still take up to a day or two.

However, once the process was completed, her loyalty could be assured and she could be part of them now.

"If we're talking about this..."

Walking past a few other cells, Fang Yuan looked at a few familiar faces and thought to himself. "We could try this method on the Lin Family, especially Lin Leiyue and Lin Benchu, and that would save Zhou Wenwu all the trouble as well..."

Regarding the Lin Family's future, although Fang Yuan had left the decision to Zhou Wenwu, it only made him more conflicted.

He could not release them, but could not kill them as well, and could only hold them in the cells.

The hardships that the Lin Family had gone through were enough. If they promised not to create trouble outside in the future, they could actually be released.

As for Lin Leiyue, since Master Wenxin could see her potential, then she should not be as simple as having spiritual abilities?

"Go!"

After leaving the jail, Fang Yuan called for the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and flew to where he captured Shi Yutong.

"You're here again!"

Within the cave, Shi Yutong crossed her legs and was seated, emotionless.

Since the moment she knew that she could not entice Fang Yuan with anything, and could not convince Fang Yuan to release her, she had been like this the whole while.

However, Shi Yutong felt a sense of danger today and tensed up.

'To improve my cultivation and my dream elemental force, I have to access many dreams and build many dreams. Even a spiritual disciple cannot guard against my dream-building abilities anymore, and the next I shall try is a Wu Zong...'

Fang Yuan had a look of determination and waved his hands, as a white fog appeared.

"What do you want?"

Shi Yutong was shocked.

The unknown was the most feared. Her elemental force was already sealed by Fang Yuan, and he could do anything to her. Yet, he was still rather serious, and must, therefore, have an ulterior motive - From the looks of it, her gut feeling was correct, but there was nothing she could do.

She was completely helpless as Fang Yuan had all the control over the situation!

As the Ecstasy Fog flowed, Shi Yutong fought hard but to no avail. Her eyes shut as she fainted

Fang Yuan maintained his seriousness.

If he failed to access a Wu Zong's dream world, the consequences would be dire.

"Hopefully, the Calming Pill would be as effective as it was described, and hopefully it would be able to clear my mind!"

Fang Yuan knew that at his current stage of cultivation, it would still be insufficient to access a Wu Zong's dream, unless he had the help of a spiritual pill.

Therefore, he swallowed the spiritual pill and pointed at Shi Yutong's forehead. "Dream Accessing!"

...

Qinghe County, Spirit Returning Sect.

The doors were tall and majestic.

A group of young children wore martial arts robes and queued up to enter the Spirit Returning Sect.

"Listen up. Spirit Returning Sect is the number one Sect in Qinghe County. It is your honour to enter the Sect. From today onwards, you need to swear your loyalty and promise not to break any Sect rules, otherwise..."

There was a martial artist coach in front lecturing the group. As he approached the end, his tone became stern.

"Now, we will begin to assign you to your coaches. Please come up if your name is called!"

The deacon's voice was heard. "Zhaohu, Wanger, Qiansun... You are under Coach Gui! Come out now!"

"Master!"

Three kids came to the front and kowtowed to a man in brown robes, as he called himself their master.

"Mm, follow me!"

The man in the brown robe looked serious and albeit unwilling, brought the three kids with him.

"The next group, Zhou Luoqiu, Bao Hongyan, Yu Bicheng... You are under Coach Zhang!"

Three other mischievous kids came up and greeted a middle-aged lady.

Their clothing revealed that they were all rather well to do. The lady coach seemed kind and a little more skilled than the previous coach in brown robes, and as she nodded her head she brought the children with her.

"Next group..."

Accompanying this voice, the number of children was getting lesser and lesser, and finally, only a few of them remained.

"This is weird... Why am I here?"

A kid in torn clothes like a little beggar had a doubtful look on his face.

It was as though an Ecstasy Fog was swirling in his head, giving him a headache.

"Who... am I?"

"Fang Yuan! Are you alright?"

At this point, a little girl approached him and asked him nervously.

"Fang Yuan? Fang Yuan! I am Fang Yuan!!"

The little beggar mumbled to himself and smirked. "Thank you, little sister!"

After being lucid, Fang Yuan felt his energy grow like animal instincts and scanned his surroundings. "Mm... This is indeed Spirit Returning Sect. All thanks to the spiritual pill, otherwise I would have been lost in this dream world..."

At his side, the little girl stared at him, clueless.

"Forget about it!"

Fang Yuan was feeling rather disturbed and pinched the little girl's cheek. It felt slightly different from Lanruo, and he asked, "What is your name?"

"Shi Yutong!"

The little girl smiled and passed to him a white handkerchief, "Come, wipe your face!"

"Mm?!"

Fang Yuan shockingly received the handkerchief and was confused.

Were the heavens playing tricks with him?

...

Chapter 143: Blood Demon

"There is no difference between the real world and the dream world?"

Back in the Green Peak, Fang Yuan made himself a pot of Questioning Heart Tea and he looked dazed.

His expectations were exceeded when he went into the dream world this time.

If the Calming Pills didn't produce its effect to keep Fang Yuan alert, he would probably not have been able to wake up on his own.

Even though he managed to wake himself up in the dream world this time, Fang Yuan was still a little confused.

"This is another effect of the dream world!"

The fragrance of the spiritual tea went into his nose and Fang Yuan touched in between his eyebrows. "I have been rushing through my cultivation recently, hence it is inevitable that I'm feeling mentally unstable!"

Even though this experience was shocking and it didn't hurt him, it gave him a reminder.

Ever since he had become the dream master, his cultivation level had improved tremendously, but he still thought it was not enough and decided to use spiritual pills to push himself further. Hence, there was a setback.

If he hadn't realised it early and wasn't able to wake himself up to recover himself with the spiritual tea and fruit, he would probably end up lost in the dream world and it would be very difficult for him to find his way back!

As he was making tea, Fang Yuan recalled Master Wenxin's Meditative Tea Ceremony. He then focused on clearing his mind to become innocent and pure.

"I have managed to learn something from this experience!"

Fang Yuan took a sip of the tea and looked at his stats window.

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 11.2

Spirit: 11.5

Magic: 10

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Dream-Building Master (Complete)], Wu Zong

Technique: [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 13) (???)], Ecstasy Spell, Shadowstep

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"Not only there is an improvement in my essence, spirit and magic, I have completed the realm for dream-building from the previous dream access as a Wu Zong!"

In other words, when he had completed the realm for dream building, it was equivalent to a spiritual knight who was already at the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm and had reached the threshold for the Elemental Breaking Realm!

This was also the evidence to show that Liu Yan, Xia Yunqing and Lan Xiaosheng were capable enough to become the prefecture masters!

"Of course.....even though elemental breaking is hard, the holy realm is even harder! To have something from a dream world and display it in the real world, even if it was just a grass, a flower, a sand particle or a small rock, it is still difficult to achieve that!"

The stage which involved a dream master to enter a dream world to build the dream was similar to a spiritual knight who was at the Elemental Gathering Realm. Fang Yuan guessed that the Holy Realm was equivalent to the Elemental Breaking Realm!

Fang Yuan didn't know what kind of magical power a spiritual knight who was at the Elemental Breaking Realm had, but for a dream master who was at the holy realm, the dream master could convert his accumulations to battle strength and this was not a trivial matter!

"If I was at the Holy Realm, even if Liu Yan was at the Elemental Breaking Realm and he had brought a few more spiritual knights who were of the same level as him to fight against me, I would not be afraid! Unfortunately....."

Fang Yuan shook his head and sighed.

"Holy Realm only has one requirement; one has to be able to display something from the dream world into the real world! It can be even just a sand particle and it will be sufficient!"

As he thought about the requirement for this breakthrough, he gave a wry grin.

One's mind could affect a matter and one's consciousness can affect the reality. How could this be so easily achieved?

The Holy Realm!

This was the realm that every dream master had wished to go for. One could say that most of the dream masters who had managed to break through successfully would be stuck in that realm.

The mountains, the vegetation, the rivers, the lakes and all living things.....All these had to be displayed which in the end, would form a small real world. How was this easy to achieve?

"Unfortunately.....Xia Country and the nearby countries like Yuan Country and Wu Country are quite ignorant. These countries don't have any inheritance of Wu Zongs and also dream masters. Or else, I will have a group of people to consult with and I will not be struggling to explore on my own....."

Fang Yuan was feeling regretful. He got up and went to patrol the garden.

As he had reached Level 5 for his botany skills, he could shorten the time taken for the plants to grow. Hence, Fang Yuan planted all the spiritual seeds he had.

The effect was the biggest on the Flame Jade Rice. The crops were heading and could be harvested soon.

This applied to the other spiritual seeds as well, even for the seed of the Vermillion Fruit which would take a long time to grow and there were only slight changes to the seed every day previously. This had caused Fang Yuan to be in despair previously.

"It is hard to get Vermillion Fruit, but I have lots of bamboo fruits...."

Fang Yuan had managed to get a good supply of bamboo fruits from the spiritual bamboo for rainy days and let out a long whistle.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

In the sky, the cloud was separated and a Red-eyed White King Bird came flying down. It landed right in front of Fang Yuan and rubbed its head against him. It showed a close relationship with Fang Yuan.

"Little White, I will need your help this time!"

Fang Yuan touched the feathers of the Red-eyed White King Bird and gave it a smile.

This bird was definitely better than the Iron-tailed Black Eagle in terms of ability. This bird was as powerful as a [Martial Artist (12th Gate)]. Plus it could get mad and fly, and hence it could fight against a Wu Zong!

Since he was heading to the Summer Sun Prefecture, it would be a dangerous trip and hence Fang Yuan would want to bring another who could fight.

"Iron-tailed Black Eagle, Flower Fox Ferret, please help to take care of the spiritual medicine when I'm not around!"

It has already been decided and Fang Yuan couldn't care what the other two spiritual beasts had thought of it. He immediately got onto the back of the bird and flew up into the sky.

...

"It was rumoured that ever since Liu Yan entered the Summer Sun Prefecture, he didn't attack Huangshi City. Instead, he ordered to have the whole city on fire and the number of people who were either injured or killed was at least 10,000. From that day onwards, whenever he met a city which had resistance, he would order the city to be burnt and the whole Summer Sun Prefecture was like a living hell....."

"Hoo! Hoo!"

In the sky, the wind was very strong.

Fang Yuan passed by Huangshi City and saw a black contour line along the city wall and it looked as if like a scar. He then gave a light sigh.

"Even though he has killed a lot of people, I will still have to admit that his method is a good one to display his might!"

"Also, as the Summer Sun Prefecture Master is killed, the whole Summer Sun Prefecture will have to listen to Liu Yan's orders in fear and no one will dare to disobey him. Liu Yan is on his way to dominating this prefecture....."

Fang Yuan was speechless with regards to Liu Yan's actions.

Liu Yan had admitted that he was not going to live any longer and he would die if he didn't make a breakthrough. It was expected of him to become so frenzy right before his death.

"The sky is turning dark. I should find somewhere to rest and continue tomorrow!"

He looked at the head of the bird and patted it lightly.

The Red-eyed White King Bird let out a long chirp and started to

descend.

"Eh?"

However, at that moment, Fang Yuan saw a bright light from the corner of his eye. The light was coming from Huangshi City and it was flirtatious.

.....

"Demon! A demon!"

A troop of soldiers from the Summer Sun Prefecture cried out loud and were running in all directions.

Behind them, there was a bright red light blinking and it formed a shape of a Blood Python. The python chose its target and started biting the target!

In fact, it had already done that.

"Ssss..."

The huge python looked real and the scales on its body were very clear. Its rolled its red tongue out and one of the soldiers who ran away the slowest was being swallowed. The blood of the soldier was absorbed and it spat back out a dry corpse.

It seemed like it was playing with its prey. It didn't kill the soldiers all at once and instead, it caused the soldiers to spread out and run away. Then, it would catch them one by one and drink their blood, like a legendary demon.

"Jie jie.....The Yang in the blood of the soldiers is just nice and the blood tastes good. This is benefitting me!"

There was a person on top of the Blood Python. The person was wearing a blood red coloured robe and was demonic.

"How dare you, demon!"

A lieutenant from the Summer Sun Prefecture shouted at the demon and he was also a 4 Heavenly Gates martial artist. He then

projected his voice to a distance away. "Since you are also a spiritual knight, how can you not know the protocol in Xia Country? A martial artist who has elemental force cannot attack any normal people randomly! Or do you want to be wanted by the 3 prefecture masters?"

"Hehe.....the 3 prefecture masters?"

The person gave a demonic smile.

"Sssss!"

The Blood Python roared and the next moment, the lieutenant didn't have time to defend himself and was trapped by the tongue of the Blood Python like a dumpling.

"Liu Yan from the Secluded Mountain Prefecture had broken the rules. He was killing people by setting the whole city on fire. Also, Summer Sun Prefecture Master Xia Yunqing was killed and the Clear Spring Prefecture Master Lan Xiaosheng had escaped with serious injuries.....Now, who else in the whole of Xia Country would dare to go against me?"

That spiritual knight was laughing crazily and was feeling regretful.

"Such opportunity to obtain blood openly in public was rare. Unfortunately, all the prefecture masters were taken away by Liu Yan and I pity them.....Hehe, their blood contained the grudges of tens of thousands of people. If their blood was given to me, I'm afraid I would be able to reach the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm instantly and I could try for the Elemental Breaking Realm....."

"Evil thief!"

A 4 Heavenly Gates martial artist could not handle a spiritual knight.

That lieutenant had no choice but could only see his own blood being taken away and he would soon become a dry corpse.

"You will be punished.....for your sins!"

Before he died, the lieutenant's voice became hoarse and he cursed.

"Jie jie.....I will be punished?"

The spiritual knight waved his hand and the dry corpse flew out. The corpse was split into a few portions as it landed on the ground. "I will still have to be fearful of punishments for my sins? In this country, who has the capability to punish me? Haha.....Haha....."

He laughed loudly and was full of arrogance.

However, the laughter suddenly stopped, as if a duck had been grabbed by its neck.

The remaining soldiers who had managed to survive looked up and saw a giant white shadow flying down quickly like a lightning. Within seconds, it was already at the head of the Blood Python.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The white shadow moved and it revealed the Red-eyed White King Bird. It revealed its claws and landed on the Blood Python with much force.

"Sssss!"

The Blood Python let out a sorrowful cry and was pushed by about 35 yards away. A blood red fog started to spread and there was a foul smell.

"Blood Demon, long time no see!"

On the back of the bird, there was a young master whom as if was sent from heaven and laughed.

"Are you.....Fang Yuan?!"

The Blood Demon could recognise that the person was Fang Yuan.

When Lu Renjia was surrounded, he was the last to reach the

battlefield and had met Fang Yuan that time. He was so frightened the previous time and hence he escaped.

"I was finding a place to rest but I didn't expect to meet my enemy. Don't even think of escaping today!"

Fang Yuan looked at the dry corpses that were lying on the ground and sighed.

"Humph! Stop bragging!"

The Blood Demon's face got serious.

He had decided on the spot to retreat that day as there was suppression from Liu Yan and he was not confident in dealing with 2 spiritual knights and 3 Wu Zongs at the same time!

However, he was only dealing with one person currently!

"Even if your power is doubled of a Wu Zong, you are still too arrogant!"

The Blood Demon looked in all directions to make sure Fang Yuan was really alone. Then, his eyes were filled with anger. "I will gladly accept your blood then!"

Chapter 144: Decapitation

"The world shall burn and drown in blood!"

Facing the country's most gifted martial artist thus far, Blood Demon did not dare to hold back his abilities. His opening move was the highest level of the Blood Magic Technique.

"Voom voom!"

Streaks of blood appeared in a shield surrounding him, making it look like he was engulfed in flames. It was quickly expanding as Blood Demon charged towards Fang Yuan.

Even though this was not the blistering Yang fire, it was the more lethal and virulent Yin fire. Once it contacts the skin, it would cause the flesh and bone to disintegrate instantly.

"This is indeed the Blood Magic Technique!"

Looking at this, Fang Yuan's eye lid jumped.

The spiritual spell used by Blood Demon were similar to those in Fang Yuan's Blood Magic Manual. They were after all from the same source. Of course, in comparison, it was evident that Blood Demon had already mastered the skills to the highest levels while Blood Killer and company were not even worthy of being his disciples.

However, to use this technique against him might seem very surprising.

After all, the Blood Magic Manual was with him!

"Rains of heaven!"

In response, Fang Yuan steadily made a hand gesture and a layer of rain and cloud appeared.

"Haha...Did you think my flames were normal fire?"

Looking at this, Blood Demon broke into a mocking smirk. It was

as though he was disdainful of Fang Yuan for underestimating him. However, his smirk widened into a shocked look of disbelief.

This was because under Fang Yuan's manipulations, relentless drops of rain poured out of the clouds into the centre of the blood-coloured flames.

"Splash!"

After a few huge loud explosions, the toxic flames that could engulf the entire world were extinguished. What was left were the white fumes that were beginning to disperse.

"How is this possible?"

Blood Demon was panic-stricken.

Not only was Fang Yuan just a novice at spiritual spells. More significantly, he only used a simple spiritual disciple technique to successfully counter the Blood Magic Technique. This was extremely intolerable to Blood Demon.

Beads of cold sweat were beginning to form on his forehead.

Based on what he felt, the drops of rain were incredibly compact and tough. Yet the rainfall was also as flexible and nimble as a fish. It went straight for the weak point of his spell and completely caused it to fall apart. It was like hot knife cutting through butter.

If he had heard of the classic tale about the chef carving the cow's carcass, it would definitely be more surprised and shocked than he already was.

This was because Fang Yuan only used a very common technique which he had practised and mastered to perfection. Furthermore, he did not expend a significant portion of his energy and powers to do so.

"This spiritual spell..."

Huge beads of cold perspiration flowed from Blood Demon's forehead. He felt as though Fang Yuan had seen through him

already.

"You have killed many innocents for no reason and committed several other heinous crimes. Today I will serve you the justice you deserve...Of course, these are not the main reasons. Who asked you to provoke me first!"

Fang Yuan smiled, and a wavering streak of green light flew out from his palm.

"Crap!"

Blood Demon retreated instantly, and a dark red light appeared from his body, "Heavenly Blood Shield!"

After setting up this defence, he turned on his heels and sped off without turning back.

How could he fight against such an opponent? He would not dare to fight against Fang Yuan ever again in his life.

After all, to fight against an opponent who could see through him was enough of a hellish experience.

After experiencing it once, Blood Demon did not wish to go through it a second time.

However, it was a pity as Fang Yuan was not going to let him off so easily.

"Go!"

With his command, the streak of green light became extremely vibrant and flexible. It skirted along the sides of the red shield and caused it to vibrate violently. Then, the green light cut through the shield with ease.

"Snap!"

Blood Demon was taken aback. He saw his shield break open like an egg shell to reveal the green light. It looked like a weirdly shaped green dagger.

"Ancient Green Serpent Dagger?"

Of course, he was familiar with this weapon which was used by Lu Renjia formerly.

"Pooh!"

The Ancient Green Serpent Dagger flew towards him from extremely tight angles.

Amidst all these, Blood Demon turned and bent over his waist into a painful angle as he attempted to dodge the weapon.

Even so, the dagger pierced through his shoulder and sent blood splattering into the air.

Fang Yuan panted violently like a hopeless beast. He was trying desperately to find a way to survive and was at the same time extremely dumbfounded by Fang Yuan's abilities.

"You have already reached the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm?"

Glaring at Fang Yuan, these words came out of his mouth with great difficulty as he refused to acknowledge the facts.

Fang Yuan breaking his spiritual spell earlier could be due to his carelessness and Fang Yuan's good fortune. However, with the dagger penetrating through his defences, it showed that Fang Yuan was indeed capable and there were no excuses this time.

Without waiting for Fang Yuan to reply, several wounds on his body opened up and blood flowed from them. It was almost as though he was dipped into blood.

"Hehe, I will remember you! Blood Escape Technique!"

With this shout, Blood Demon transformed into a ray of red light and shot away with amazing speed.

Previously, he also used a similar technique while escaping from Liu Yan and Taoist Mu Li. Even though Taoist Mu Li had a spiritual bird, he was also unable to catch him.

"Red-eyed White Bird King! Rage!"

At this point, it was evident that Blood Demon might not be that lucky again.

With a shout, Fang Yuan leapt onto the Red-eyed White Bird King.

The bird cawed continuously. The tips of its feathers turned into a bright red bloody colour. Its originally blistering speed increased by five times! With a flash of white light, it easily caught up with Blood Demon.

"How is this possible?"

Blood Demon was completely at loss of what to do.

This technique was his last resort. Whenever he executed it, it would take up a huge portion of elemental force. It even had negative side effects such as causing him to sustain serious injuries or decreasing his powers.

Of course, with such risks involved, the results were outstanding. It enabled him to travel at a speed so fast that even a normal spiritual bird could not keep up with him.

Ever since Blood Demon trained and mastered the Blood Magic Technique, he had always relied on this technique as a trump card and reassurance to do whatever he wanted.

However, how was it possible that the spiritual bird Fang Yuan was riding could keep up with him?

Blood Demon was shocked to the core.

Not only was Fang Yuan able to reach the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm at such a young age, how was it also possible for him to get a spiritual bird as powerful and ruthless?

‘Something is wrong, this spiritual bird is obviously a large eagle. Its speed cannot be this fast!’

Blood Demon tried to spur himself on "Even though this bird

might be faster than me, it might be because of some secret elemental energy. As long as I can outlast it, I still might escape!"

Thinking about this, he drummed up his courage and bit off the tip of his tongue. He then spat out a mouthful of vital blood.

"Splash!"

Riding atop Red-eyed White Bird King, Fang Yuan saw the traces of blood on the ground grew thicker with shades of purple. Blood Demon's speed increased by 3 times.

"Hehe...you are now gambling your life on this?"

Calmly, he took a few bamboo fruits and fed them to Red-eyed White Bird King and ordered, "Continue to chase after him, let's see how much more blood can he afford to spit!"

"Kaw kaw!"

Red-eyed White Bird let out a loud shrill and the feathers on it became even redder. With the enhancements of the bamboo fruits, the duration of its rage was extended.

After some time.

"What the...what creature is that? It has endless energy? This is not normal!"

The rays from the Blood Escaping Technique grew weaker. Blood Demon was ghostly pale, and the black colour of his hair faded to resemble a sickly and withering tree. He was unsteadily falling to the ground.

Hearing the caws from the bird behind him, he opened his mouth with much difficulty, but he no longer had enough vital blood.

"Haha... it seems like my proud life will have to end in such a pathetic manner. This is retribution!"

Blood Demon's coarse vocal chords made his laughter sound as horrendous as a crow. His vision went black and he fell to the ground.

"Hmm?"

Red-eyed White Bird King landed majestically as Fang Yuan leapt off. He was slightly suspicious as he wondered, "Is he dead?"

As the rays of light of the Escape Technique vanished, he saw Blood Demon.

Blood Demon's corpse was in state way worse than those preserved by Fang Yuan. All the vital blood in him was expanded.

"He exhausted himself by continuously using the Blood Escaping Technique"

Fang Yuan then looked at the utterly exhausted Red-eyed White Bird King next to him and immediately fed it a few bamboo fruits, "Eat them slowly, do not worry, I still have many more for you..."

If Blood Demon came to life and saw this, he would definitely die of anger again.

"Green Serpent! Go!"

Looking at the breathless Blood Demon, Fang Yuan still refused to leave anything to chance. Waving his hand, a green ray of light appeared and shot towards Blood Demon, slicing off his head.

Only then did Fang Yuan truly believe he was dead.

"You are indeed a special fellow, even though you died such a pathetic death..."

Fang Yuan then unhesitatingly stepped up to search his body.

He was very interested to find what a spiritual knight had in his possessions.

Sadly, Blood Demon was a poor devil. He had nothing else on him except for a jade scroll.

Fang Yuan then used his magical will to look through Blood Demon's corpse. He found the lower portion of the Blood Magic Manual. It seemed like Blood Demon had some form of relation to

Blood Killer.

It was a pity that the two of them were killed by Fang Yuan, but Fang Yuan could not be bothered to find out more.

"These types of unscrupulous issues are not worth my time. But the Blood Escaping Technique does seem promising!"

Fang Yuan was not interested in the Blood Magic Technique at all, but he was pleased to find the Blood Escaping Technique in the lower portion of the Blood Magic Manual.

Undoubtedly, even though the Blood Escaping Technique used up a lot of energy, it was more of a benefit than a loss to someone who mastered it.

"However, is this all a spiritual knight possessed?"

Fang Yuan could not believe this. Thinking of how Blood Killer behaved, he waved his hand. The robes on Blood Demon were torn open instantly to reveal the naked corpse of Blood Demon.

"Eh?"

At this time, something caught the attention of Fang Yuan.

A patch of skin on Blood Demon's chest looked different from the skin on the rest of his body. Evidently, something was done to it.

Fang Yuan waved his hand. With a flash of green light, the piece of skin flew into Fang Yuan's palm.

"What a brilliant way to hide this!"

This piece of skin was treated before. It was extremely similar to human skin. As it covered Blood Demon's flesh for some time, it was not immediately obvious that it was not human skin.

It was only because the way in which Blood Demon died caused his muscles to shrink, exposing the difference to Fang Yuan.

"Could this be a special technique too?"

In the extremely thin piece of leather, it could only store at most

a sheet of paper. When Fang Yuan opened it, his eyes widened, "This is..."

In his hands was a piece of old map. The lines and colours on it were extremely familiar to Fang Yuan because he already had two other similar pieces!

"The third piece of the treasure map!"

Chapter 145: Plot

"This is heaven's will!"

In front of Fang Yuan, the three damaged treasure maps combined into one and transformed into a complete map which outlined an area with a red dot at its centre. It was only when the three maps were combined before the information was revealed. Even if an outsider possessed a copy of the map, it was worthless as the true copy was required.

"The first map was a gift from Han Shou, the second map was obtained from the Five Ghosts Sect from Lieyang County...and this third map was with the Blood Demon..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his eyebrows as he pondered.

"Wait...According to the findings of the Five Ghosts Sect, the third map was with the third disciple of 'that master' who had left the country...and this Blood Demon was coincidentally a spiritual knight who travelled the 4 seas...Could he be the descendant of the third disciple?"

His eyes brightened, "If that is really true, a lot of things would make sense!"

From the Blood Magic Technique, the Blood Demon and the Blood Killer were somehow linked, and if the Blood Demon was the descendant of the 'that master', he would surely know the secret of the treasure map. If that was the case, it was no coincidence that the Blood Killer and the Five Ghosts Sect Master knew each other and were likely to be influenced by the Blood Demon to act as a spy to locate the other 2 maps.

Even the Blood Killer's action of swallowing the treasure map would make sense.

Although this was just a speculation, Fang Yuan felt that the guess was not far off from the truth.

"I seem to have an affinity with treasures recently. I have just obtained Lu Renjia's secret mansion and another bigger treasure awaits me..."

Fang Yuan carefully examined the map.

There were a few mountain ranges and water bodies on the map that appeared foreign to Fang Yuan. However, he was certain that he would be able to track down the location of the treasure if he compared the map with the maps of Xia Country and the neighbouring countries.

"The treasure must be really important. From the methods of 'that master', there might even be risks. Now is not the time to be impatient!"

Fang Yuan leapt onto the Red-eyed White Bird, "Time to go to Liu Yan's banquet...just that..."

He looked at his surroundings and appeared to be perplexed, "Where is this place?"

...

Just as Fang Yuan chased too far and left the borders of the Summer Sun Prefecture, and had to hurry back.

Summer Sun Prefecture City.

The prefecture city had undergone many changes. After the fire, the city walls still remained. However, the original flags had now been replaced by the flags of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Force. There were few pedestrians on the streets and they hurried with their head down. They would occasionally glance up at the flags and the soldiers, their eyes full of hatred.

The Prefecture Master's Residence was bustling with activities.

Ever since Liu Yan displayed his unparalleled military might, the Sects within Summer Sun Prefecture had started to come forward to surrender.

Furthermore, Liu Yan had gathered the Wu Zongs and the spiritual knights and consolidated his power to with an air of unifying Xia Country. Banquets were hosted in the Prefecture Master's Residence for days and nights and the residence was extraordinarily lively.

Rare and precious spiritual items, especially fire-type items were confiscated by his troops and delivered to his residence.

"Adding oil to a blazing inferno, what good luck!"

Outside the residence, an old man who was previously secretly conversing with Xie Lingyun gazed in front of him, his eyes appeared to flash.

He turned, and looked at Xie Lingyun, "Princess, are you ready?"

Xie Lingyun bit her lips and appeared to be helpless, "Even you said that that man possessed good luck, why are we even fighting so hard against fate?"

The Taoist Elder was not only of high cultivation level, in the spiritual knight world, he possessed all kinds of abilities. Xie Lingyun had previously experienced his powers and did not dare neglect it.

"That is incorrect!"

The Taoist Elder shook his head, "While Liu Yan possessed good luck, his fate is like a bonfire which requires an endless supply of firewood to keep it burning. However, his energy is starting to diminish and he does not have much time left. He had spent much of his energy in defeating the two prefecture masters previously. If we act now, he would have no chance to live."

Xie Lingyun was hesitant and did not speak.

"Hehe...unless you want to see him unify the prefectures and eventually enter the capital and usurp the throne?"

The Elder Xuan Sheng sneered.

"Of course not. It is just that your conditions are too harsh...for the two families to become in-laws and divide the counties. The Secluded Mountain Prefecture have 6 counties which belong to the country.....our ancestors fought countless of wars to create this. How can we easily give this up?"

Xie Lingyun replied slowly.

"Since the passing of the King of Xia, the three Prefecture Masters have coexisted side by side. These lands only belong to the royal family nominally..."

Elder Xuan waved his hand, "Furthermore...you have already agreed to be with the king and even sign the documents. Are you trying to go back on your promise now?"

"Of course not!"

Xie Lingyun glared at the elder, "Lingyun just wanted to remind Elder Xuan that we hope that Wu Country would abide by the agreement. While Xia Country might not be as strong, we still have an army!"

"Of course!"

Elder Xuan turned red, "When you are married to our king, Xia Country and Wu Country would be united. The king of Xia would be the father-in-law of our king. Of course, we would come to your aid. Once we have gotten rid of Liu Yan, Xia Country would be able to reclaim the Summer Sun and the Clear Spring Prefectures. That would be a cause for celebration!"

"I certainly hope so!"

Xie Lingyun sighed deeply, "I have already brought the Wuzong from my country. The spy within the City Master Prefecture would assist you too. When are you going to act?"

"Liu Yan had already been exposed to the Elemental Opening Bottleneck. Ordinary traps would not work on him. Only by pressuring with an ambush by an army would work on him!"

Xuan Sheng laughed, "I brought the imperial advisor of Wu Country, the Blood Demon and the elders as backup especially for today. With the Wuzong and the spy in the residence, Liu Yan has no chance of surviving."

"Imperial advisor of Wu?"

Xie Lingyun appeared to be afraid upon hearing the title.

"Haha...if he did not offer his help, who would dare to take on Liu Yan? Now princess, do you believe in our sincerity?"

Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng laughed loudly. He took out a string of firecrackers and tossed it into the air, causing it to explode mid-air.

"Honghong!"

In the deafening blast, an overpowering aura could be felt. A man flew forward on a Qingye spiritual weapon and boomed, "I am Wu Wudao! Where is Liu Yan?"

"Imperial Advisor of Wu?"

Liu Yan and Taoist Mu Li flew out of the residence on the back of the Wind Chasing Falcon, their expressions solemn.

This was especially true for Liu Yan.

With just a look, he could tell that the person in front of him was no less powerful than him. They were both at the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm and were stuck at the bottleneck.

"Wu Country and Xia Country had never interfered with each other's state affair. Why is the imperial advisor here?"

Liu Yan asked loudly.

"The devoted took to the task when the victims begged for help!"

Wu Wudao wore a golden helmet. His face looked boorish and he sported many battle scars. His cape flowed with the wind and he gave out an overbearing presence. He was a highly skilled spiritual knight.

"Victims begged for help?"

Liu Yan's eyebrows appeared to be smoking, "Those traitors in the capital! I should have disposed of the royal family first when I had the chance!"

"It is too late to say all these. Come!"

Wu Wudao beckoned.

"Come!"

Liu Yan's expression was grave. He spoke to Mu Li, "You go first and rally the troops and guard against any raid!"

"Understood!"

Mu Li retreated before his expression changed. He aimed for Liu Yan's back and struck him.

"You..."

Liu Yan could not react to this betrayal in time and was struck by Mu Li. His face turned red and he spat out a mouthful of fresh blood.

"How dare you!"

He ground his teeth and his surroundings were set ablaze. The Wind Chasing Falcon below him caught fire and turned into a massive blaze in the sky.

"Please forgive me! I have my reasons to do so!"

Taoist Mu Li stood behind Wu Wudao and said, "I originally worked for the Xia royal family. My previous interactions with you were all a facade!"

"Haha, well done!"

Xuan Sheng witnessed the scene and raised his eyebrows, "I did not expect that the princess would insert a spiritual knight as a spy next to Liu Yan. This level of deception makes me feel so inferior now."

"This is insignificant. Act now. I do not want the Secluded Mountain Prefecture to be given the opportunity to rise again!"

Xie Lingyun's words were cold. It was time to remove the problem at its roots now that she had already acted!

"Very well! With our underhand methods and the reputation of the princess, we will accomplish great things within the Summer Sun Prefecture!"

Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng gave the signal and not long after, the whole Summer Sun Prefecture was in a state of unrest.

"Prefecture Master!"

Leader Niu and his man rushed forward towards the area where the Wind Chasing Falcon fell upon seeing Liu Yan being ambushed.

"Hong!"

Spiritual strength spurted out and shredded the corpse of the Wind Chasing Falcon. Liu Yan walked out slowly, "I am fine!"

The corner of his mouth was dripping with fresh blood that contained a tinge of green.

"Master Liu, there is no need to use the Wind Chasing Falcon to instigate me..."

Taoist Mu Li spoke coldly, "You are heavily wounded at your core and poisoned badly. How much more spiritual energy do you think you can harness?"

"Taoist Mu Li, you would dare to do such a thing?"

Leader Niu bellowed.

"When two armies go to war, unscrupulous methods would naturally be utilized!"

Wu Wudao laughed, "Don't tell me you don't know this?"

"Haha...good!"

Liu Yan appeared to be breathing weakly. However, his eyes were

bright, "There will only be one survivor in today's battle!"

Chapter 146: Death

"Hmmmm? That is..."

Fang Yuan rode on the Red-eyed White Bird and soared above the nine heavens at an astonishing speed.

As he reached the borders of the Summer Sun Prefecture City, his expression grew serious.

Immerse spiritual pressure could be felt in the direction of the prefecture city. The city was ablaze and was covered in thick black smoke. The scene looked apocalyptic.

"Could it be that Liu Yan felt that burning the eight cities was not enough and wanted to burn down even the Summer Sun Prefecture?"

Fang Yuan spat, his face solemn.

In the prefecture city, a plot was being carried out against Liu Yan who was surrounded by assassins!

"Given Liu Yan's current prowess, only those who are extremely skilled and hold high appointments in the country would be able to force him to this stage...could it be that the wheel of fate has turned? He had not even gotten the Wu Zongs and the spiritual knights in the two prefectures to swear their loyalty to him and it appears that he is going to be disposed of first..."

Fang Yuan smiled.

He did not know if Liu Yan would be a blessing or a bane in the future. At least now, he would not be forced to take sides.

"Little White, fly higher!"

Fang Yuan gave the orders to the Red-eyed White Bird after he thought through it.

It would be safer for him not to take sides and instead observe when the two sides clashed.

....

As compared to Fang Yuan, the countless people in the prefecture city were not as calm.

"Houhou!"

In the sky above the residence, 9 scarlet fire dragons with their tails intertwined together were spitting flames. This caused the whole sky to be painted crimson red.

"Heavenly Fire Dragon?"

Xie Lingyun's emotion was a mix of fear and regret as she witnessed this scene, "Liu Yan had truly reached the Elemental Breaking Bottleneck!"

"It is precisely so that will seal his fate!"

Xuan Sheng spoke without a moment's hesitation, "In the neighbouring Wu Country, Yuan Country...and even Xia Country do not have a spiritual knight who has reached the Elemental Breaking Bottleneck take on a command position. Who would wish to have a superior if they are powerful leaders themselves?"

Xie Lingyun laughed bitterly. She did not know why but a silhouette of a youth appeared in her mind.

She knew that he was an exceptional genius who had the potential to surpass Liu Yan given enough time.

"Wu Wudao! I will bring you down along with me if I die today!"

Liu Yan stood on top of the fire dragon's head, his eyes fixed on the Imperial Advisor.

His hair was in a mess and his chest was riddled with holes. He looked sinister and let out a laugh. He bit his tongue and spat out a mouthful of purple-red blood. His pores opened and beads of blood started to flow out to form a figure of a man from the blood.

"Flaming Blood Secret Technique! Scarlet Dragon Fire Pill...explode!!!"

"Houhou!"

The nine fire dragons let out a cry before they each spat out an illusionary pill the size of a fist. The pills combined to become the size of a human head, raging with flames and flew towards Wu Wudao.

"Chhh!"

Wu Wudao did not dare to be complacent and hurriedly dodged the attack. However, layers and layers of the Five Elements Light appeared on his body and surrounded him.

In that instant.

The fire pill pursued Wu Wudao and clashed with his defence.

"Honglong!"

The heavens and earth turned dark.

The wind howled and tore at the ground.

"Cough cough..."

Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng looked at the sky amidst the dust, "Shit... If the Blood Demon was here, Liu Yan would have fallen into the trap with his previous technique and would be subdued by the Blood Demon!"

"Why is he not here?"

Xie Lingyun asked coldly.

"This.....how would I know?"

Xuan Sheng looked around and saw something. He immediately leapt forward, "Imperial Advisor sir, are you okay?"

"Cough Cough.....I am fine!"

Xie Lingyun followed closely behind and arrived at a badly damaged stone wall. She could see a person with torn clothing and badly burnt skin. His abdomen was pierced by a metal spear and he was nailed upon the wall, fresh blood trickled from his wound.

Upon seeing the arrival of Xuan Sheng, his eyes brightened, "I may have been struck by Liu Yan's flying spear, but he had been struck by my God Searching Palm. Not even the deities can save him! The final victory is mine! Cough cough..."

He appeared to be proud and spat out mouth after mouth of fresh blood.

"Don't mind me, go and collect Liu Yan's corpse! Also, get rid of all the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Forces, especially the three Wu Zongs!"

Wu Wudao waved them away and grasped the metal spear. With a yank, he pulled out the spear which resulted in his blood gushing out from his body.

"Understood!"

Xuan Sheng respected the Imperial Advisor. He stood up and gave the orders to his people.

Behind him, Xie Lingyun witnessed the scene.

After this incident, the prefecture city was badly damaged. In addition to the destruction of the cities, the Summer Sun Prefecture was greatly weakened.

After Liu Yan's death, Wu Country would gain the Secluded Mountain Prefecture according to the agreement which would further enhance their power.

The strong ones would become stronger while the weak ones would become even weaker. Would Xia Country be able to fend off Wu Country's conquest after tens or hundreds of years?

Lingyun was afraid that not even a small village would be left!

Her view was bleak when she thought about it.

...

"Cough Cough..."

After Liu Yan used the Flaming Blood Secret Technique, he was sure that he was going to die. He was immediately surrounded after he beat Wu Wudao.

He was groggy and could not remember what happened next.

It was then when a small blaze that went down his throat and spread through his body caused him to wake up and open his eyes.

He could see that he was in a cave. The floor was wet. It was dark and silent. The moss that grew at the sides were covered in dew drops.

"I...I..."

He opened his mouth and realized that his voice was coarse like sandpaper. He could not help but smile bitterly.

Just the act of smiling caused him to feel like his body was being torn apart.

After being struck by Wu Wudao's God Searching Palm, he had completely lost his Elemental Force that he had painstakingly trained and was now useless.

It was a miracle that he was still alive after sustaining such grave injuries.

'I must have been saved by a master or unknowingly swallowed some treasure for me to be still hanging on to my life.'

Liu Yan's eyes lit up with hope as he realized that there was someone there.

"Master Liu, are you awake?"

The voice was familiar. The other person took out a Bright Moon Pearl which lit up the whole cave. Liu Yan was astonished. "It's you! Fang Yuan!"

"Of course it's me!"

Fang Yuan laughed and sat beside Liu Yan, "Who else would be

able to save your life other than me? What happened in the Summer Sun Prefecture City?"

From his question, Liu Yan was convinced that Fang Yuan was not a member of Wu Country.

Liu Yan remembered his defeat and his expression grew dark, "The Imperial Advisor of Wu challenged me to a fight, Taoist Mu Li was a spy and betrayed my troops and I..."

He did not have to use his brain to guess that the troops and even the three Wu Zongs in the prefecture met their ends.

"Imperial Advisor of Wu?"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and looked at Liu Yan, "You are gravely wounded and your magical energy is diminishing. There is no doubt that you will die! I can only prolong your life for a while longer. If you have any regrets, do say now!"

"You would help me seek revenge?"

Liu Yan's eyes were burning.

"No..."

Fang Yuan smiled, "If you request something that is not too difficult and my mood is good, I will help you. If the task is too difficult, dream on. I will just bury you and we will be even!"

Liu Yan flushed. He could not speak out any more requests.

After a while, he sighed, "I regret not being able to break through the Elemental Breaking stage..."

"I am afraid that you would still be involved even if you wanted to stay out of it, Brother Fang!"

"Oh? Why is that so?"

While Fang Yuan could deduce as much, his heart sank when he heard what Liu Yan said.

"Haha... why did Wu Country agree to help out this time? This is

because the Xia Country Royal Family gave them sufficient incentives! Hmm! Those stupid worms, other than the state, what is there to sell? I am not sure of the other conditions, but I am sure one of them would be dividing the land in return!"

"Dividing of land?"

Fang Yuan stroked his chin, "The Secluded Mountain Prefecture would be affected by the drawing of the countries' boundaries!"

"That Wu Country...cough cough..."

Liu Yan coughed, his whole face red. It was obvious that his time had arrived, "...had coveted the Secluded Mountain Prefecture for a very long time. It was previously prevented by me. Now, it is up to you. Brother Fang, I still had a favour to ask of you and I hope that you would not decline!"

"Speak first!"

Fang Yuan's face was distorted.

"I hope that you would take over the position as the Prefecture Master of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture!"

Liu Yan said solemnly.

"Me?"

Fang Yuan pointed at himself. He was speechless.

The position of Prefecture Master had always been held by the most powerful. As of now, there was no one more suitable than him.

"That's right, this is my way of revenge and is definitely beneficial for you too!"

Liu Yan struggled before he managed to take out a black seal and passed to Fang Yuan.

"This seal enables you to take command of the troops in the 6 counties within the Prefecture...I still have some treasure in the

residence. They are now yours! Remember that the Wu Country is very greedy and ambitious. They will not let any outsiders break through to the Elemental Breaking Realm. They come for me this time and they will not let you go next time!"

Liu Yan used his remaining energy to tightly grasp Fang Yuan's hand.

Not long after, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master who had astonished numerous countries took his last breath and passed away.

Chapter 147: To Seize

"Secluded Mountains Prefecture Master?"

Within the cave, Fang Yuan looked at the body of Liu Yan and the black Secluded Mountain Seal in his hand. He pondered without speaking for half a day before he shook his head. "He has really given me a tough problem!"

There was no doubt that Liu Yan was selfish and wanted Fang Yuan to avenge him before he passed away.

The position to be the Prefecture Master was a bait!

However, Fang Yuan had to admit that Liu Yan said was true.

In the struggle for power, those spiritual knights who were close to surpassing the Elemental Opening Realm would become a thorn in the flesh of the countries.

Then what about him, the genius who was just barely over 20 and had already surpassed the Elemental Force Realm in both martial arts and magical prowess?

He was able to enjoy peace previously as the Secluded Mountains Prefecture already had Liu Yan who was targeted.

Furthermore, they did not realise that his rate of improvement would be so frightening.

If Wu Country had found out that Fang Yuan had already reached the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm, he would suffer the same fate as Liu Yan.

When he had taken over the position as the Prefecture Master, he would draw attention and trouble from all sides and would not be able to hide away from them even if he were to hide in the deep mountains!

"This is the dilemma! Both sides would not be able to feel at ease with each other, especially after the death of Liu Yan..."

Fang Yuan sighed, "Only when one side is destroyed, or when absolute dominance is achieved would there be peace, if not, there will be war and lives lost!"

His name had already reached the ears of Wu Country. Furthermore, Liu Yan was no longer there to protect him.

Once Xia Country had divided the Secluded Mountains Prefecture, he would be under the jurisdiction of Wu Country. His fate would no longer be under his own control.

"It appears that I should take on this position!"

He could either choose to escape far away or go against Wu Country.

As he was pressured by both sides that were on the verge of war, it was naturally better for him to take on the position and consolidate his power in the Secluded Mountains Prefecture.

"I will play with all of you!"

Fang Yuan laughed.

The greatest difference between Liu Yan and him was that he was still young and had a lot of resources. If things did not go his way, he could easily escape on his eagle. There will always be another opportunity for him to come back.

Only when he was willing to lose would he gain.

After all, Fang Yuan was not a dead man hanging from a tree.

...

He would do what he thought of.

Fang Yuan's speed was unmatched due to the Red-eyed White King Bird.

He reached the Secluded Mountains Prefecture City even before the news of what happened in the Summer Sun Prefecture reached.

"In terms of speed, my Red-eyed White King Bird is unmatched...however, the news are not just spread by men. If Wu Country was coming, they would have mobilized their troops by now..."

Fang Yuan circled the city another round before patting the Red-eyed White King Bird. Together, they descended in front of the City Master's Residence.

"Who are you?"

In an instant, a group of soldiers surrounded him. Upon seeing that it was Fang Yuan, they immediately shrank back.

They could remember that Fang Yuan did not even give the Prefecture Master any face. What about them? They saluted Fang Yuan, "Welcome Master Fang!"

"Hmm, where is the City Guardian? Bring me to him!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and asked.

"The City Guardian is sick and would not be entertaining any guest, we are really sorry!"

An officer of the army turned pale and immediately said upon hearing Fang Yuan's request.

"Oh? Sick? All the more I should pay him a visit!"

Fang Yuan smiled and arrived next to him, "Have you forgotten that I am the famous doctor within the prefecture? What illness does the City Guardian have? Let me go and have a look!"

"This..."

It was obvious that the officer was hiding something. His eyes were shifty and just as he was about to speak, Fang Yuan grabbed him and his body went limp.

"Lead the way!"

Fang Yuan appeared to be smiling but his words were laced with

threat.

He possessed immense martial arts and could easily act before the bystanders were able to react.

"Okay..."

The officer knew that he would die if he were to challenge Fang Yuan.

From an outsider's point of view, Fang Yuan was amiable and was bantering with the officer. However, the officer knew better and could only lead Fang Yuan towards the residence with a bitter face.

"Shualala!"

Upon reaching the courtyard, Fang Yuan could hear the sound of armour dragging against the floor in the surroundings.

The troops of soldiers stepped forward, their swords unsheathed and their arrows aimed at Fang Yuan.

A black-faced officer raised up an emblem, "The City Guardian ordered that he would not entertain any visitors today. Please leave!"

"Hmmm? What courage!"

Fang Yuan laughed and boomed, "Even if Liu Yan was here, he would not dare to use this tone to talk to me! Could it be that you are giving false orders and conspire against me?"

The atmosphere in the prefecture city had been weird these few days.

Even the vice city guardian claimed to be ill and would not see any guests.

A few soldiers wavered and shrank back.

While the black-faced officer was their superior and even carried the emblem, they should not be expected to fight with a person

that was both a Wuzong and a spiritual knight!

How many brothers-in-arm would be wounded or killed if they were to take part in the fight without the support of a martial artist who had reached the Elemental Force Realm?

"Not obeying the orders would make you a traitor! Kill!"

It was impossible for the black-faced officer to back down. He commanded, "Those who retreat will be killed!"

The soldiers were well trained and upon hearing the command of their superior, they fired their arrows towards Fang Yuan without hesitation. This caused the captive in Fang Yuan's hand to cursed, "You dare hurt me?!"

"Xiuxiu!"

The arrows rained down.

The unfortunate officer had just scolded a sentence before he was riddled with holes from the arrows, much like the hives of bees.

Fang Yuan wore a smile as the arrows passed through him as if the arrows were passing through the surface of the water in the lake, causing no harm except for a few ripples.

"Illusion? That's not good!"

The black-faced officer immediately retreated. The spiritual talisman on his body lit up and a wall of water rose behind him.

"Shadowstep!"

In the blink of an eye, Fang Yuan appeared before the officer and reached out to grab him.

"You want to stop me with just a spiritual talisman?"

"Kacha!"

Under the surprised gaze of the black-faced officer, the wall of water shattered like an eggshell. It did not even manage to delay Fang Yuan for a while.

Fang Yuan grabbed him by the throat and lifted him up.

"You are a spiritual disciple and yet, you are working as an officer in the army. What a waste of talent!"

He teased before looking around. Countless of soldiers did not dare look him in the eyes and instead hung their heads down.

"I am an outsider and an enemy of the City Guardian. The Prefecture Master begged me to create chaos and set things right. You, bring me to the City Guardian!"

He randomly pointed to a soldier at the side, "Don't dare?"

"Well..."

The soldier hesitated and was struck down by Fang Yuan. "This person is a traitor!"

He turned to another soldier. "You, bring me there fast, if not you will meet the same fate as him!"

Wu Country had already infiltrated the Secluded Mountains Prefecture Armed Forces and even controlled the City Guardian. However, Fang Yuan was sure that there were still some who were loyal.

Fang Yuan was in no rush and could slowly ask one by one.

After killing 3 or 4 people, a soldier could no longer bear it and knelt down to beg, "Sir, please spare us. We were forced by the officer. I will bring you to see the City Guardian immediately!"

"Let's go!"

As more and more soldiers and officers gathered around looking suspicious, Fang Yuan smiled and asked the soldier to lead the way.

Not long after, they arrived at a small courtyard. Fang Yuan immediately kicked the door of the room open and saw a few people surrounding the bed as if to shift a patient. Upon seeing Fang Yuan breaking in, they instinctively thought to silence him.

Fang Yuan was caught off-guard.

"How dare you seize the City Guardian?"

Fang Yuan shut his eyes and a spiritual light glowed in his hand. A green thread flew out and circled the interior of the room.

The few people where inner power experts and there were 2 martial artists who had reached the 4 Heavenly Gates. However, Fang Yuan was too fast and before they understood what was happening, had turned into souls under the blade of the Ancient Green Serpent Dagger.

"The City Guardian was really seized?"

Outside, countless of officers rushed forward and were stumped when they saw the patient on the bed, "[Hei San](#), how can you do this?"

"Enough, all of you get out, after everything is settled, I will let you see your City Guardian!"

Fang Yuan tossed Hei San aside as if he was trash and said.

Fang Yuan had already established his position amongst the soldiers. A few officers looked on in dismay before balling up their fists and left. Not long after, shouting could be heard before it turned peaceful once again.

Fang Yuan came to the side of the bed and looked at the unfortunate City Guardian.

The City Guardian was at the 4 Heavenly Gates before he fell into the trap set by Wu Country. His fate was no longer up to him to decide.

"Poisoned? Simple!"

Given his medical abilities, he had no trouble curing this man. After analyzing his conditions, Fang Yuan gave him a Yama's Order and waited.

After a while, the City Guardian sat up and spat out a mouthful of

black blood. The colour returned to his face and he saluted, "Zhang Qingfeng is grateful for your aid!"

"Hmmm, was this done by Wu Country?"

Fang Yuan put his hands behind his back and asked.

Zhang Qingfeng replied, "I have a close confidante who was bought over by them. They could not buy me over and instead poison me. I am afraid that if they did not have any use for me..."

Cold sweat started to form on his forehead as he thought about what could happen.

"Good, do you recognize this?"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and took out the Secluded Mountains Seal.

"Ahhhh? This is..."

Zhang Qingfeng was momentarily shocked. After he carefully looked at it, he kowtowed, "The humble servant meets the Prefecture Master!"

"Do you not question this?"

Fang Yuan was surprised.

"Before the Prefecture Master left, he told me that whoever holds the Secluded Mountains Seal would be the Prefecture Master!"

Zhang Qingfeng teared, "Furthermore, before they suppressed me, they revealed information which I thought was fake and that it was just to confuse me. I did not know that it was true...Master, you must avenge the previous Prefecture Master!"

Hei San is the name of the black-faced officer.

Chapter 148: Reform

'Revenge? If not for Wu Country's ill intentions, I wouldn't get myself involved in this mess!'

Fang Yuan rolled his eyes but displayed a face of sincerity. He supported Zhang Qingfeng from his bed. "Don't worry. Since I've accepted the appointment as Prefecture Master, those who plot against the old Prefecture Master will be our enemies!"

"Prefecture Master!"

Zhang Qingfeng continuously paid his respects. "You have saved my life, and are determined to take revenge for the old Prefecture Master. From today onwards, my life is yours, and I will obey your every command!"

"Very well!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and had the exhilaration of playing a video game. "It is of utmost importance to gain control of Secluded Mountain Prefecture! The Secluded Mountain Prefecture City is the core of the entire prefecture! How confident are you in controlling the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Forces?"

"Quite confident!"

Zhang Qingfeng replied without hesitation. "Although my martial arts is not that good, I can still train soldiers out. Most of the new soldiers out there were trained personally by myself! And as for the platoon leaders, there were all recommended by me as well!"

This was his saving grace, to convince Fang Yuan of his usefulness.

"Very well. Later on, go outside and convince the soldiers to close up the four doors. Use the group of traitors as leads to find out who are the other spies, and clean up the city!"

Fang Yuan ordered decisively.

"Understood!"

Zhang Qingsheng replied loudly and draped an armour over himself.

He was, after all, a martial artist of the 4 Heavenly Gates and had Fang Yuan's aid. He recovered quite a bit already and regained his might after equipping his armour. As he opened the door, he could hear the cheers from the Secluded Mountain Prefecture soldiers.

"Good!"

Fang Yuan witnessed this scene and nodded his head. He knew that the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was finally under his control.

...

The Secluded Mountain Prefecture City was especially crowded today.

Previously, a large white bird intruded the city, followed by the chaos in the Prefecture Master's Mansion.

While the crowd was unsettled, groups of soldiers went out to the streets and sealed the four doors. They enforced their patrolling as well.

Even the dullest would have guessed that something big happened.

All the residents were afraid of the unknown and closed their shops and houses. They hid in underground caves and shivered in fear, afraid of the violence that would ensue.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

With the sealing of the 4 doors and the lookout from above by the red-eyed white kind bird, the next step was to locate the spy families based on the sources and eliminate them.

It was a fearful scene to behold.

Even the most influential of families were among the list of families, and the entire family had to be removed.

There were a few cases of retaliation, which could not be taken down by the normal soldiers. The highly skilled martial artists within the Prefecture Master's Mansion would then personally see to it.

In a short while, the entire Secluded Mountain Prefecture was covered in blood.

"Who would've known that the Wu Country did not send a spiritual knight here, not even a Wu Zong... Otherwise, I'll have to personally see it!"

In the Prefecture Master's Mansion, Fang Yuan wore a new set of grand robes and wore a crown on his head. He looked much more cultured than before, and became more gentlemanly, as he shook his head in disappointment.

"It is rare to find martial artists that are able to harness elemental force, even in Wu Country, and they had to take charge of the various counties. To deploy manpower in the Summer Sun Prefecture and trouble the Secluded Mountain Prefecture is not an easy thing to do!"

Zhang Qingfeng reported.

He held a name list in his hand, with bloodstains on it. As he went through the name list, he was utterly shocked.

"If I use my soldiers against all these people, I might have to lose thirty percent of them!"

"Thirty percent is good enough already!"

As Fang Yuan heard him, he snickered and looked at Zhang Qingfeng. "Now that the Prefecture City is under our control, what's next?"

"If your predictions are right, that the Wu Country and the Xia Country's royal family came to an agreement, their next step would be to enter the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. Now that we do not have a footing, we might be plotted against by Summer Sun, Clear Spring Prefectures and the Royal Family! The most important thing to do now is to gather the forces of all 6 counties to witness your appointment, and announce to the world that you are in charge!"

Although Zhang Qingfeng had yet to break through to Wu Zong, he had the looks of it and added, "Take this opportunity to command Qinghe, Cangshui, Lieyang, Cangyi counties... Send their leaders to congratulate you, and deal with those who are absent!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. In reality, this was how politicians show off.

Those who were willing to witness his appointment as Prefecture Master were those who would willingly follow him and could be treated as their own people.

Those who were not willing to even show their faces would be traitors, and there would be no qualms killing them.

"However, there is something to be discussed..."

Zhang Qingfeng continued, "The previous Prefecture Master brought his strongest allies to war with him, and from the numerous deployments of soldiers, we only have an army of 5,000, and including all those from the other counties, it would still not exceed 10,000. Furthermore, the majority of them are new and inexperienced soldiers, and are unlikely to be able to defend against the Wu Country's attack!"

"The only solution is to force conscription for all families, and to investigate within Summer Sun Prefecture..."

Fang Yuan was lost in his thoughts. "10,000 of our troops were

destroyed in one day. There must be a few survivors, and the few capital leaders are Wu Zongs as well. Although they might have been trapped, they might still have a chance at survival. Sending people to Summer Sun Prefecture to investigate might have its returns."

"Yes, Prefecture Master!"

Zhang Qingfeng dismissed himself, with excitement written all over his face.

Fang Yuan remained disappointed as he shook his head.

Regardless, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was still badly damaged. Even if he immediately recruited new soldiers and was able to instil loyalty in every one of them, it would still be akin to using a praying mantis's arm to block a car against an infuriated Wu Country.

Since he agreed to take up this appointment as Prefecture Master, he had confidence in achieving his objective. He could not reveal this secret, not even to Zhang Qingfeng, who had only just displayed loyalty to him a few days ago.

"One of you!"

As he walked out, he called for one of the soldiers to come towards him.

"Prefecture Master, what instructions do you have for me?"

This soldier knelt on one knee and was rather respectful.

"Rush to Qinghe County, Qingye City, and pass this letter to Zhou Wenwu!"

Fang Yuan passed a letter to the soldier.

Calling his own subordinate here was only normal. Since he was removing the spies, there would be vacancies for him to insert his own trusted subordinates.

...

Many days had gone by.

News of the change of command among the soldiers in Summer Sun Prefecture and the death of Liu Yan only reached Secluded Mountain Prefecture now, which shocked many.

With Fang Yuan in charge of the Prefecture City, everyone was calm and composed since the spies were already wiped out.

He walked to the centre and made an announcement with the Secluded Mountain Seal. He ordered for all families to mourn for the old Prefecture Master for three days, before preparing for his appointment ceremony.

Outside the Prefecture City.

Carriages passed by, as they could see the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City, like a large black beast.

"This is unthinkable... Who would've guessed that I could come to the Prefecture City in this status..."

Yu Xinlou peeled the curtains and mumbled to himself after seeing the city.

He was plotted against by other people and had to unwillingly give up his ancestor's business here before following Fang Yuan to Qingye City.

However, there were so many changes in such a short period of time.

The death of the Prefecture Master, and the appointment of Fang Yuan as the next Prefecture Master, who would have the power over thirty percent of the entire Xia Country!

"This is very different now!"

Yu Xinlou sighed and clenched his fist. "I must help Master to gain total control over the 6 counties!"

"Dada!"

"Dada!"

Suddenly, a group of calvaries arrived outside the city gates.

The carriage became tensed up. The people from Qingye City had the escort of the soldiers from Qinghe County and therefore went up to confront the calvaries. "Who are you people?"

"I am the City Guard Zhang Qingfeng. I am under orders from the Prefecture Master to welcome all of you!"

Zhang Qingsheng stopped his horse and examined the people in the carriage.

"Sorry to have troubled you!"

Yu Xinlou hurriedly returned a greeting. "Let's not waste time, shall we enter the city!"

As they entered the Prefecture City, the solemn atmosphere was overwhelming. Yu Xinlou's heart was heavy as he looked at one of the guards.

As they entered the main hall, he sighed in relieve on seeing Fang Yuan sitting calmly in the seat of the Prefecture Master. He greeted him without ado. "Greetings, Sir, and congratulations on being appointed as the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master!"

"Congratulations Sir! Congratulations!"

Behind him, other than Zhou Wenwu who had to remain in Qingye City to take charge, the rest were here. Huang Fu Renhe, Zhang Sheng, and even Lanruo and Chen Ziyang, his two disciples, were here as well to congratulate him.

"Mm, all of you are here just in time."

Fang Yuan nodded his head and started to assign them their respective roles:

"Yu Xinlou, you are the Nine Gates Administrator. Your job is to manage the trading in Nine Gates Trading Market, and let it function as normal!"

"Zhang Sheng, you are the Prefecture City's Secret Guards Leader!"

...

These were all originally his subordinates, but now they were given extremely high-status appointments.

"Yes Sir, we will lay down our lives for you!"

After being appointed to their ministerial roles, these subordinates paid their respects once more, knowing that their fate was all intertwined with Fang Yuan. If he prospered, they would all prosper, but if he died, they would all die.

"The most important thing now is my appointment ceremony. Work together to get it planned, and don't leave out any important guests and presents!"

Fang Yuan casually instructed them, but as he was doing so, an excited voice interrupted him. "Prefecture Master, good news! Good news!"

"Mm? Come in!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands and saw Zhang Qingsheng waving a letter, full of excitement. "The latest news from Summer Sun Prefecture is that the general that we have sent encountered a large Secluded Mountain Prefecture army of around 9,000 soldiers, and they were led by Leder Niu and Leader Xiang!"

"Mm?"

Fang Yuan stood up and was rather surprised. "Is this true? Both the capital leaders are all right?"

"Leader Niu is alright, but Leader Xiang has mild injuries, but only superficial!"

Zhang Qingsheng was overjoyed.

"Haha... Good!"

Fang Yuan was suspicious about the news, but all he displayed was a face of happiness. "Send someone to assist them!"

"Congratulations, Prefecture Master! This calls for a celebration!"

Yu Xinlou and the rest were all filled with excitement.

Just as he started out on his appointment as a Prefecture Master, such good news already came his way. Indeed, it was blessing from the heavens.

Most importantly, with this additional help, he could be much more confident.

Chapter 149: The Ceremony

It was the fifteenth day of the seventh month in the Xia Calendar. The day was marked as an auspicious one, and was a suitable day for those who wanted to start a business or travel.

The weather was pleasant and there was a gentle breeze.

Within the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, families took down the white cloths that were put up to mourn for Liu Yan, and changed to red cloths, in celebration of the appointment of the new Prefecture Master.

Fang Yuan chose this date to hold his appointment ceremony.

A few days ago, martial artists and sect masters from all over came to the Prefecture City, making it livelier than before.

As the gates of the Prefecture City opened, guests and visitors flowed in.

"The Governor of Lieyang County is here!"

"The Five Ghosts Sect Sect Master is here!"

"The Governor of Cangyi County is here!"

"The gang leader of Giant Whale Gang is here!"

...

As they reported their names, those who held high appointments within the Secluded Mountain Prefecture gathered in the main hall.

Yu Xinlou and company put in a lot of effort for the entire ceremony. From the rituals to the details on welcoming every guest, everything was settled very well, and had the vibe of an extremely important ceremony.

"Master taking over as Prefecture Master is what everyone wants!"

From afar, Fang Yuan watched silently, and behind him was Zhang Qingfeng, who exclaimed.

"That's right, what everyone wants!"

Fang Yuan wore a grand silk robe and a crown. He looked like a fine gentleman and had a domineering vibe.

At his appointment ceremony, everyone was congratulatory; no one had any opposing intent.

Firstly, it was because there were all aware of the impending invasion from the Wu Country. No matter how capable this young man would be, he would still lose.

Secondly was that Fang Yuan's appointment was official.

There was an agreement stating that the strongest among the Prefecture would be the Prefecture Master.

Based on skill, who could match up against the martial artist cum spiritual knight Fang Yuan?

In terms of influence, he already had the loyalty of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Forces, and his own base at Qinghe County, Qingye City. With Niu Dingtian's and Xiang Zilong's support when they return, there was no one else who could fight with him for this appointment.

He had the skill and the means and therefore was only natural for him to be the Prefecture Master.

Of course, with this appointment responsibilities would come.

"The auspicious time is here!"

Accompanying the firecrackers, the ceremony master's voice became louder.

"Let's go!"

Fang Yuan took the golden cloak over and draped it over himself. With the airs of a master, he walked into the main hall.

"Greetings to Prefecture Master!"

Every guest greeted him with a smile as he walked past.

If not for his dream master cultivation and his shocking magical energy, he would not have known the true feelings of these guests.

'Suspicious... afraid... fearful... There are only a few true loyal ones!'

His mind was cold but he kept his joyful appearance.

His footsteps were silent as he walked up to the stage. At one side, Zhang Qingfeng looked serious as he held a tray with a black seal on it. It was the Secluded Mountain Seal.

In reality, all the loose ends were tied up; this was just a ceremony.

"Prefecture Master, will you please have the Secluded Mountain Seal!"

As drum beats were heard, Zhang Qingfeng knelt down and presented the seal.

"Mmm!"

Fang Yuan held the seal in his hands and walked up to the Prefecture Master's seat. He sat down and appeared composed.

"As Prefecture Master takes his seat, subordinates shall pay our greetings!"

As the ceremony master exclaimed, even the most scheming subordinate had to follow the flow, kneel down and bow three times in respect.

'This is a gentleman's pleasure!'

Seeing the masses kneeling before him, Fang Yuan felt that he harnessed a huge power, which could make him go over his head easily.

Fang Yuan being Fang Yuan, he was able to be awakened from

the trance easily after countless training from dreams.

It only took a simple thought for him to regain clarity.

Regardless if he was taking over Qingye City or taking control of Secluded Mountain Prefecture, it was simply just dealing with others.

When it was time to give up, he could do so easily with little to no attachment to the power.

"Life is like a game of chess, and the other people are like the chess pieces. As a Prefecture Master, I shall engage in a good game of chess with the surrounding countries!"

Within a thought, Fang Yuan felt enlightened as the cultivation of his mind became deepened.

The experiences in his dream world were ultimately fake. However, they were of a great assistance as training opportunities to cultivate his mind in the real world.

As he regained his composure, a clear voice travelled through the entire hall. "Everyone, please rise... As the new Prefecture Master takes his place, we have a lot of unfinished business to settle, and I hope everyone will cooperate!"

Everyone got up to their feet and looked at each other, and saw the majestic and young Prefecture Master, as everyone flinched in their hearts.

"The messenger from Wu Country is here!"

At this point in time, the door outside shook, and the ceremony master's voice of hesitation was heard.

"Prefecture Master?"

Niu Dingtian stood out.

He was a boor and displayed his loyalty to Fang Yuan after knowing of Liu Yan's plans while he was alive.

Fang Yuan only used those that he trusted as his subordinates, as he gave them important roles.

It was the same for Xiang Zilong, except that he was still recuperating from his injuries.

Niu Dingtian felt that the messenger was hostile. "Do you want me to chase him away?"

"Today is an auspicious day, and all who come are guests. Do invite him in!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and passed his order down.

Not long after, a skinny man in brown robes adopting a daoist priest appearance entered as he stared at Fang Yuan intensely.

"I am Xuan Sheng, and I'm here to congratulate Prefecture Master's appointment on behalf of the Wu Country!"

Daoist Elder Xuan Sheng cupped his hands, and without much respect, continued. "Presenting a hundred taels of gold, a pair of Ruyi, and an Imperial Letter!"

"Imperial Letter?"

Fang Yuan sighed. "What is it written?"

Xuan Sheng stroked his beard and chuckled, as though he did not care that he was in enemy's territory, brimming with confidence. "This Imperial Letter is signed by the Xia Country's advisor, stating that the land of the entire Secluded Mountain Prefecture is now under the jurisdiction of the Wu Country!"

"What?"

With the news, the entire hall was in shock.

Even though he had heard of the news of Xia Country giving up land to Wu Country, he did not expect them to be crazy to the extent of giving up an entire prefecture to the neighbouring country!

There was a commotion in the entire hall.

"Silence!"

Fang Yuan appeared calm as he struck his right palm out.

"Weng!"

A large energy was felt throughout the entire hall, as though everyone's neck was held and the commotion stopped.

A few people witnessed this scene and broke out in cold sweat.

The fear from this new Prefecture Master was no less intense as compared to Liu Yan, which was an unbelievable thing.

"... Based on the Imperial Letter, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture is now the property of the Qu Country. Your appointment as Prefecture Master will have to be approved by our country and written in our records before it is official!"

Xuan Sheng continued to blabber on. "My country's king loves talents. If you prepare a huge gift for him and follow me to see my country advisor, who else could snatch this appointment from you?"

He tried to incite Fang Yuan, and even Niu Dingtian could not come to a decision.

Xuan Sheng was waiting patiently with anticipation.

'Once Fang Yuan agrees, he would be officiated and the Secluded Mountain Prefecture would fall even without an invasion... Even if he is undecided, if he is willing to join the Wu Country, he would fall into our trap, and is still a good outcome!'

As he was thinking of the possibilities, Xuan Sheng looked at Fang Yuan and his eyes shone brightly.

'Eh? This old daoist has ill intentions, and is still trying to confuse my divine spirit?'

As he came into eye contact with Xuan Sheng, he felt his

consciousness collapsing, as he almost unknowingly agreed.

But who is he?

As his dream elemental force moved, he recovered from the trance and was infuriated. "Hehe... Who cares about the Xia Country's Imperial Letter?"

"What?"

Xuan Sheng's expression changed. "This man is young and possesses high magical energy. How could he escape from my Six Soul Eyes... Strong adversary! If he continues to develop, he would be a big threat to the Wu Country!"

Only at this moment did he realise that his neck stiffened. He could not move away from Fang Yuan's glare, as though he became a puppet, unable to move. "Backlash!"

Although his Six Soul Eyes were impressive, if his target was much stronger than him, it would result in a backlash, and this backlash might even kill him.

Fang Yuan did not give him any regard. "Wu Country is a crazy country! The Wu Country's Imperial Advisor is greedy and cruel. The previous Prefecture Master died in your hands and now you want to convince me?"

"My Secluded Mountain Prefecture can survive on its own, why bother about outsiders trying to seal us up? As for the Xia Country king, losing his land is such a disgrace and an ungentlemanly act. I will question him personally next time!"

"Ah!"

As he finished his words, Elder Daoist Xuan Sheng spat out a mouthful of blood.

That was not all.

As he covered his eyes, he wailed. As he got up to his feet, a pair of eyeballs fell out, leaving two bloody eye sockets, striking fear in

anyone who saw him.

"Good... Good..."

Elder Taoist Xuan Sheng was pale, as he laughed. "I have no foresight, and deserved this! But, Prefecture Master, don't get too cocky... My Wu Country's Imperial Advisor has already prepared an army of 100,000 soldiers at the boundaries of your Prefecture, waiting for the command to invade. Once the go-ahead is given, your tiny prefecture will be reduced to ashes!"

This was a huge threat, and many who heard it were shocked to their wits.

"Prefecture Master... Who would've known..."

Inside, Niu Dingtian was shocked beyond words, and could not say a single thing as he looked at Fang Yuan.

He knew that this old daoist was highly skilled, and was equivalent to the level of a spiritual knight. He was still initially worried that Fang Yuan might be at a disadvantage.

But look, by just staring at him, even his eyeballs could fall off?

This scary move could even be stronger than Liu Yan's spiritual spells.

"Very well, then bring my work to your Imperial Advisor!"

Facing a threat, Fang Yuan chuckled. "Tell him, I am waiting for him to come here and die!"

Chapter 150: Preparation

The sky was dark.

There was supposed to be a banquet after the ceremony.

However, the Secluded Mountains Prefecture was facing an imminent crisis. Those in power were not in the mood to be frivolous. They had either left the ceremony or were waiting for Fang Yuan to give his orders.

"Prefecture Master!"

Fang Yuan stood majestically on a high platform.

Zhang Qingfeng arrived behind him and bowed deeply before reporting, "The names of those families and sects which have left the prefecture city have been taken down!"

"Very well, once I have assumed my position, I will order leader Niu to bring his troops and use those people as examples to warn the rest!"

Fang Yuan stroked his chin, his eyes flashed coldly.

How would Wu Country react to his display of strength?

'Even Wu Country has to pay for murdering Liu Yan. I would be able to buy some time if I display my strength and confuse them further.'

'There is no time to retrain the troops. However, there is sufficient time to flush out those traitorous families and sect!'

Grand Hall.

The candles burned brightly and lit up the surrounding.

The surrounding four bronze pillars contained blocks of ice with pipelines to emit cold air but the people in the room still felt hot and uneasy.

No matter what, no one would be at ease facing Wu Country.

"The Prefecture Master ascend to his throne!"

Following the music, the entire hall was silent.

Fang Yuan sat upon the golden Nine Dragons Throne and looked down at the masses.

Below him, Leader Niu, Zhang Qingfeng, Yu Xinlou, Zhang Sheng and a few other trusted aides were present.

Upon seeing his arrival, the people who were feeling uneasy appeared to have found their pillar of support. They quietened down and waited for his instructions.

"Zhang Qingfeng, explain the situation!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand as he maintained a poker face.

"Yes, sir!"

Zhang Qingfeng stepped forward, bowed at Fang Yuan before facing the crowd, "according to my reports, the troops of Wu are gathering at the borders of the country. Their numbers are no less than 10,000! Furthermore, although the Summer Sun Prefecture is in shambles, there are troops being deployed in the Clear Spring Prefecture and the Xia Country capital. We cannot discount the possibility of an attack on multiple fronts! The army that we are facing in total might be more than 20,000!"

The people in the hall shivered.

"What about our side?"

Fang Yuan was unconcerned and probed on.

"We have gathered the troops in the 6 counties. In addition to the factions in the Summer Sun Prefecture, we have around 30,000 soldiers. Furthermore....most are new soldiers who did not have sufficient training!"

Zhang Qingfeng said bitterly.

The Secluded Mountains Prefecture was sorely lacking highly-

skilled warriors in the beginning. Now, even the common military might was lacking as compared to other prefectures or countries.

It was no longer as simple as a defeat but rather an irrevocable loss!

"Very well! In my position as the Prefecture Master, I will now give the first order!"

Fang Yuan's face remained unchanged upon hearing all kinds of bad news, "Those sects and families that are loyal to the Secluded Mountains Prefecture, fortify the defenses and gather at the prefecture city!"

"At the same time, Leader Niu, bring the troops and purged the prefecture of those whose names appeared in the list!"

"I want to make sure no enemy would get a single grain of rice or sway a single person in my land!"

....

The faces of the masses changed when they heard those words.

"Sir..."

Zhang Qingfeng said, "The enemy is too powerful. This plan would only buy us some time but in the end, it would not be of any use... the Secluded Mountains Prefecture would be reduced to a swamp!"

"Your loyalty is commendable!"

Fang Yuan said, "I have my own plans and am making preparations. You do not have to say anything more and may go now!"

Zhang Qingfeng retired. He was gloomy before he had a sudden realization.

This Prefecture Master was barely over 20 years old and had already achieved so much in martial and spiritual arts. Could it be that he was also a genius in other fields?

He was worried as he had seen many martial arts geniuses who created a mess when they tried their hands on other things.

"Yes, sir!"

Leader Niu answered loudly and was full of energy. "I had long wanted to teach those people a lesson! Now, they will know the power of the whip!"

It was obvious that he wanted to punish the traitorous families who betrayed those in the Summer Sun Prefecture and would not go easy on them.

"As for Leader Niu, you will recuperate your wounds to prepare for the oncoming battle!"

Fang Yuan further comforted Xiang Zilong.

The two people were the most highly-skilled martial artists he had.

"I am willing to serve the Prefecture Master and avenge the previous Prefecture Master!"

Xiang Zilong used his remaining arm which could move to salute, "Xiang Zilong will follow all your orders!"

"Very good, with the two of you working together, what can I not achieve?"

Fang Yuan laughed heartily and gave another order, "Yu Xinlou, I need you to help me collect some stuff, the greater the quantity, the better. As for you, Zhang Sheng, I would need you to make a trip to Xia Country capital and the Clear Spring Prefecture to deliver 2 letters!"

"Yes, Sir!"

"Understood!"

Yu Xinlou and Zhang Sheng carried out their orders while Xiang Zilong pondered for a while before asking, "Prefecture Master, do you mean to cut ties with Xia Country?"

He butted in, which resulted in Zhang Qingfeng feeling momentarily annoyed and Yu Xinlou to glare at him.

"That is naturally the case. After all, the Secluded Mountains Prefecture is given to Wu Country. Liu Yan is already dead. What other reasons do they have to remain as enemies?"

Fang Yuan shook his head, "Even if they send troops to help Wu Country, it will just be a front and cause the neighbouring counties to strengthen their defense. This will buy us some time and allow us to battle Wu Country to decide the victor!"

"The Prefecture Master is indeed wise!"

Xiang Zilong was satisfied with the explanation and retired.

...

By the end of July, Niu Dingtian had purged countless traitorous families and disciples of the sects.

Wu Country was unable to help those traitors. Niu Dingtian was backed by a Wu Zong and supported by a large army. No one was a match for him.

Except for those who felt something was amiss and fled the prefecture long ago, the others were not so lucky.

The relocation of the masses also started just like that.

The two moves were unpopular with the masses and Fang Yuan received backlashes from the two moves as the newly appointed Prefecture Master.

Wu Country army camp.

The soldiers of Wu set up camp with their military banners flying high. Each sector was filled with trenches and was heavily guarded. Every soldier was going about doing their own things and it was not feasible to harass or poison the troops.

All of them were fit and muscular. Their face looked as if they were ready to kill.

The Country of Wu placed a strong emphasis on the military where the king had absolute authority over it. The army had over 20 ranks and the soldiers were rewarded heavily for their effort, be it gold, silver, women, land and even martial arts manuals. As such, the troops took pleasure in going to war and the military might of Wu Country was far greater than that of other neighbouring countries. Only the cavalry of Yuan Country was ahead of them when battling in the grassland.

"Imperial Advisor!"

In a huge tent, the floor was covered in golden fleece which was unceremoniously stepped on. Incense was lit in the four corners, emitting green smoke.

Wu Wudao sat cross-legged. He suddenly opened both his eyes to look at Taoist Xuan Sheng.

"Your Six Soul Eyes is considered to be the best amongst the Wu Country's 3 great miracle techniques. To think it would be destroyed?"

Wu Wudao's heart skipped a beat as he looked at the gaping hole.

"That new Secluded Mountains Prefecture Master is no ordinary man. He is a threat to Wu Country!"

Xuan Sheng spoke coldly, "Not taking his physical cultivation into account, his magical energy is immensely strong to the point that it is terrifying!"

"I heard that he is only 20 years old? He is indeed a genius who would be able to surpass the Elemental Opening Realm!"

Wu Wudao sighed, "First, it was Liu Yan. Next, it was Fang Yuan. Why are such capable heroes not born in Wu Country? Sigh...the heavens treat Wu Country so unkindly and treat Xia Country so generously!"

"Nothing good comes out of not accepting heaven's will!"

Xuan Sheng replied, "Xia Country is weak and cannot utilize its talent. This is the cause of all its troubles. It is a good opportunity that heaven gives to Wu Country!"

"Well said!"

Wu Wudao clapped his hands and laughed. His face suddenly turned a deep shade of red. He immediately took out a pill and swallowed it.

The pill was snow white and was kept in a black jade bottle. After the pill left the bottle, the interior of the tent felt like a cold wind blew past it and the temperature dropped a few degrees.

"Mystical Ice Pill? How are your wounds?"

Xuan Sheng furrowed his brows.

"Liu Yan's move was really strong. Even with the help of the Mystical Ice Pill, I am afraid that it will take half a month to keep the wound under control!"

Wu Wudao lowered his voice, "I have sent a message to my two worthless disciples and General Fei Long to come and help!"

"If that is the case, the Secluded Mountains Prefecture would not be a problem!"

Xuan Sheng nodded his head and appeared to be satisfied.

The Imperial Advisor was a spiritual knight who had reached the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm. He was exceptionally good at imparting skills and had 300 disciples under him, of which two of them had broken through the Elemental Force Realm.

As for General Fei Long, he was a famous expert in Wu country. He had taken part in countless battles and had won them all. He was also highly-skilled in martial arts and had once taken on and defeated 3 Wu Zongs! He was ranked number 2 in Wu Country after the Imperial Advisor!

With such military might, the Secluded Mountains Prefecture

who had only three people in the Elemental Force Realm was doomed without a doubt!

"Furthermore..."

Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng looked secretive. He took a few steps forward, "I have a plan which I am quite sure to have a high chance of success!"

"Hmm? Speak!"

Wu Wudao raised his eyebrows.

"To tell you the truth, I had planted numerous spies within the Secluded Mountains Prefecture. While most have been rooted out, the biggest spy still remain!"

Xuan Sheng continued, "According to him, while the Prefecture Master is highly cultivated, he knows nothing about warfare and is too naïve. He has made preparations to settle everything in one shot. Why not we beat him at his own game. Even if we win, we must make them fear us by winning clearly!"

Chapter 151: Spy

At the Eighth month, The Imperial Advisor of Wu Country, Wu Wudao, led an army of 100,000 troops to invade the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, destroying everything he came across.

Within 10 days, he was able to take control of two counties, as he pushed the boundaries closer and closer to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City, signalling his intention to destroy the Prefecture. As the word spread, the entire country was in shock.

Cangshan City.

The city was built around the mountainous areas, and its geographical location was of extreme importance, as it was right at the edge of the Prefecture City. Following a plain would lead one straight to the Prefecture City, and was therefore intensely fought over by both sides.

Fang Yuan led his army of 20,000 troops across the wilderness and into Cangshan City, ready to face the 100,000-men strong army from the Wu Country.

"Listen up! The Wu Country's Armed Forces are invincible, and since our Imperial Advisor is generous, he has granted all of you one night's time to surrender. If you don't comply, you will die without a doubt!"

Suddenly from below, they were calvaries and a voice convincing them to surrender. "... Don't say words that you are not prepared to!"

"Hmph!"

Zhang Qingfeng was infuriated. He took a bow, pulled it all the way back and released an arrow.

"Whoosh!"

A deafening sound came from the release of the bow, and the

arrow shot into the sky, quick as lightning. It pierced through the soldier on a horseback and pinned him to the ground, as the fletching quivered.

"Good!"

The soldiers on the city walls exclaimed, and as they saw more calvaries approaching, they kept the corpse, all the while in silence.

The difference between both sides was too huge that even Zhang Qingfeng did not have much confidence in his own army.

"Let's go down to the conference, then have a good night's rest before preparing for the big battle tomorrow!"

Fang Yuan wore plain clothes, quietly observed the scene and gestured.

"Yes, Sir!"

...

A group of men walked down the stairs and arrived at the main hall. Unable to hold himself back, Xiang Zilong enquired. "Prefecture Master... The opposing force has a strong army and calvaries, and are five times the size of ours. Furthermore, they have the Flying Dragon General leading them, as well as the Wu Country's Imperial Advisor and three other spiritual knights, how can we match up with them?"

"Don't worry!"

Yu Xinlou walked out, a little dazed and shook his head. "Our Master had made some preparations beforehand!"

This confused everyone, especially Xiang Zilong, who looked at Fang Yuan.

"Please say the truth! The Wu Country's Armed Forces are strong, much stronger than our army. If we clash head-on, we will surely lose!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and explained the truth. "And this is why I need everyone to defend for three days, and after three days, the situation will change!"

"Three days?"

Xiang Zilong looked at Niu Dingtian in disbelief, as both of them shook their heads.

...

That night, a black figure flew out of Cangshan City and landed in the Wu Country's military camp.

"Three days?"

Xuan Sheng took the bamboo tube from the spiritual pigeon before letting it go. He then instructed a daoist disciple by his side to read it out for him, and his was shocked as he scanned the surroundings.

Even though both his eyeballs were not there anymore, he could still strike fear in those that made eye contact with him.

"A change in situation after three days? Impossible!"

It was Flying Dragon General.

He was middle-aged and had white sideburns. His sharp eyebrows and glaring gaze gave him a gentlemanly feel; he was surely a handsome young lad in his younger days.

As he stared at the map, he shook his head. "Unless he can fly his troops, there is no other way of a change in the situation within three days!"

"Regardless if he was just bluffing us, or if he was really confident, we don't really need to care about him!"

Wu Wudao smiled. "Even if that Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master had gathered his troops in Cangshan City, we can still go head-on and take them down!"

"That's right, a good strategy would be to use plots and deploy more troops to take down their small army!"

Flying Dragon General nodded his head in agreement. "Regardless of what plan he has, I can just break all of them by brute force!"

"Since both of you think this way, then we shall invade them tomorrow!"

Elder Daoist Xuan Sheng said, "Even if we cannot take down the city, at night time, I can still order for our spy to take them down from the inside!"

Even though he did not mention who the spy was, the rest still nodded in agreement.

Afterall, to them, the new Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master did not know what he was doing. Anyone under him could be a spy, and it seemed that it was just fate for the Secluded Mountain Prefecture to fall.

...

As time flew by, it was the second day.

"Orders from the general! Invade!"

100,00 men formed up and lined up in a continuous never-ending line.

Accompanying the order from the general, the other soldiers of the Wu Country repeatedly chanted, "Invade! Invade! Invade!!!"

At the sound of the horn, ladders, arrow towers and invasion vehicles were pushed in front of the formation. The archers took up their spot, looking serious and full of will to fight.

Seeing this scene, the soldiers on the city walls shuddered in fear.

Even though the soldiers of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Forces had martial arts, they were still in fear. After all, the usual martial arts duel and fighting were different from war

altogether.

"Throw the rocks! Throe!"

In the Wu Country Armed Forces formation, more than 10 carts were wheeled into position, and on the command of the Lieutenant, large rocks were continually hurled towards the city walls.

"Rumble!"

"Rumble!"

Rocks ranging from 13 pounds to 130 pounds were directed at the city walls, breaking a large hole in it and making a large rumbling sound.

The rumbling was continuous, and there were even cracks forming at some places.

After a wave of rock-hurling, the rock carts seemed to become defective after much usage and were wheeled away to be serviced. Many ant-liked soldiers pushed the ladders and arrow towers and braved the arrows from the city, advancing towards the city gates.

"Prepare the arrows, shoot!"

On the city walls, Zhang Qingfeng roared and ordered as a rain of arrows flew downwards.

Many soldiers were shot down, but they did not back away. Instead, they approached the city walls and as their arrow towers covered them, they began to ascend the ladder upwards.

"Prepare the Golden Liquid! Pour!"

"Where are the rocks? Fire away!"

On the city walls, pots of boiling hot Golden Liquid were poured down the walls relentlessly. Accompanying it were the giant rocks being rolled down, smashing many soldiers and burning many too. In a short while, the bottom of the city walls had a thick layer of blood. The entire scene was extremely gory.

"Leader Niu, Leader Xiang!"

Fang Yuan remained composed as he continuously deployed troops, and called for both Wu Zongs.

"The enemy is ferocious, so be wary of their Beheading Strategy!"

"Thank you for your concern, Prefecture Master, we will be cautious!"

Niu Dingtian and Xiang Zilong bowed, and Xiang Zilong added, "If we still had our experienced soldiers, they would not have the guts to attack us head-on!"

What is the Beheading Strategy?

It was that they might send their elemental force martial artist who would have only one objective: to take out Fang Yuan, or that they would use their soldiers to surround the opposing Lieutenant in order to win the battle without fighting.

Fang Yuan used this strategy before by taking out Lu Renjia, returning peace to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. It was the easy way.

However, the situation now was different.

His 20,000 strong army was all in the city. Even if the enemy's spiritual knight or Wu Zong made it through the gates, they would be captured by the three of them. Without regard for the soldiers' lives, they could surely exhaust any spiritual knight or Wu Zong to death.

Therefore, to both sides, this was not a fair trade.

Furthermore, it was no secret that Fang Yuan possessed a spiritual bird.

Even if the enemy was stupid, they would not be stupid to the extent of entering and sacrificing themselves.

After a day of gruesome battle, there was a mountain of corpse below the city gates.

"Retreat!"

Under the scorching sun and the bloody mess around, the Wu Country's army retreated out of the massacre site.

"Reporting, Prefecture Master!"

Zhang Qingfeng had many wounds, and his armour was dyed blood-red. "The Wu Country's attack today was ferocious. About a thousand of our men died, and 800 of them were severely injured! Their army's casualty rate would surely be folds of ours!"

As he reported, his eyebrows twitched.

The opposing army was crazy, too crazy than he expected.

If it was like that daily, it would only take 10 days for the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Forces to crumble.

"Since today has passed, it means that we have two days left. Everyone is dismissed, and rest well for the battle tomorrow!"

Fang Yuan casually waved his hands.

"Yes, Sir!"

...

It was nighttime. Pitch-black and there was no wind.

A secret room within the city was brightly lit.

A few Lieutenants of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Forces were gathered, looking solemn. "We cannot continue this war!"

"It only took one day for our casualty rate to be 10 percent, so how can this be sustainable?"

A bearded well-built man slammed his fist on the table. "That person is Wu Zong and also a spiritual knight, and has a spiritual bird as well. If the situation becomes worse, he can leave, but we would be stuck here awaiting death!"

"That's right!"

The other Lieutenants were deep in discussion, expression their dissatisfaction.

This was partly due to Fang Yuan's inexperience in handling a large army and he was, therefore, unable to appease the army.

In reality, if not for his gifts and martial arts, there might be a rebellion and the army would break free of his control. As of now, there were only holding it in.

"Lieutenant Xiang, what is your plan for gathering us here?"

A few other Lieutenants scolded a few more times, but all shifted their attention to the person in the middle.

"That's right!"

A lieutenant among them all laughed. "Everyone are brothers, so I shall speak the truth. There is no doubt that the Secluded Mountain Prefecture would lose. If we want to survive, or even live a comfortable life, the best plan is to switch loyalties!"

As he spoke, not one of them questioned him, which revealed that most of them had in one way or another thought about it.

"Based on our abilities, to betray would be extremely difficult!"

Lieutenant Qiuran sighed. "Zhang Qingfeng is extremely loyal to that person and is still a martial artist who harnesses elemental force. He even patrols the city gates personally..."

"What if you included us?!"

Suddenly, a shadow appeared, entering the room.

"Mmm?"

The Lieutenant who was discussing the secret was in shock and almost pulled out his knife. As he saw the person's face, he relaxed and looked happy. "Leader!"

"What a coincidence, it's my duty to patrol today. It would be easy to betray and give the city up!"

The leader sighed. "I am doing this not for myself, but to avoid the impending war on the Secluded Mountain Prefecture!"

"Leader, you are right!"

The Lieutenants were all overjoyed. "Under the leadership of leader, what is there to be afraid of?"

A few rash individuals blurted out. "This appointment of Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master should have been yours. Fang Yuna is just an outsider, what rights does he have to claim this appointment?"

"Very well, let's not waste time. Let's..."

This person was deep in thought and suddenly he frowned. "Who's there?"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

A high pitched chirping travelled from outside, and a figure appeared, followed by a voice. "Niu Dingtian, have you seen for yourself and heard it for yourself?"

Chapter 152: Appearance

"Brother Xiang, I didn't expect that you were such a person!"

Niu Dingtian's voice was deep and was filled with shock.

Xiang Zilong knew that he couldn't escape. He went to the entrance with a few other lieutenants. Illuminating the way with their fire torches, they saw Fang Yuan, Niu Dingtian, Zhang Qingfeng and a few other soldiers already surrounding the whole place.

Niu Dingtian, who was in front, was still in disbelief. "Why are you doing this, Brother Xiang?"

"Hehe....The winner shall be the king, and the loser shall be the beggar. Since I've lost, what can I say?"

Xiang Zilong gave a cold smile and looked at Fang Yuan. "But, how could you have known that it's me? Enlighten me, Prefecture Master, so I can rest in peace!"

"Your plan was perfect, but I had already begun to suspect you from the beginning!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and continued, "Summer Sun Prefecture was so dangerous, but you two Wu Zongs managed to escape, how fortunate!"

In fact, this was just an excuse Fang Yuan used to explain his suspicions of Xiang Zilong.

The actual reason was that he was a dream master and therefore could sense evil in Xiang Zilong.

"Just because of that?"

Xiang Zilong couldn't believe it.

He had always been very loyal to Liu Yan and did not harbour any thoughts of betrayal while on the way to the Summer Sun Prefecture. Hence, he couldn't believe how Fang Yuan was able to

see through him.

"Yes, it is because of that.....Plus....."

Fang Yuan chuckled and continued, "Since I'm the Prefecture Master, do I need any reason to suspect you? Oh.....I will need to thank you for sharing the intelligence with the enemy. As a token of appreciation, I shall let you die faster!"

"You....."

Xiang Zilong broke into cold sweat.

He didn't expect that Fang Yuan, a young Prefecture Master to be so profound!

Fang Yuan knew that he was a spy, kept mum, pretended he didn't know anything, and even caused him to share fake intelligence with Wu Country!

An ant would do everything to keep itself alive.

The few other lieutenants around appeared hopeless, but Xiang Zilong was different. Scanning his surroundings quickly, he was prepared to escape this place!

After all, he was a Wu Zong and could go anywhere he wanted to go. If he could escape to the enemy's camp, he could live there comfortably for the rest of his life. Why would he be willing to die here?

As this thought flashed through his mind, there was a sudden change!

"Whoosh!"

Fang Yuan shifted himself quickly like a lightning and in a blink of an eye, he appeared right in front of Xiang Zilong and grabbed him!

"Chi! Chi!"

The surrounding air became tense, and as Fang Yuan started to

grab hold of him, the surrounding air became as though they were layers and layers of chains, restricting Xiang Zilong.

Even though he knew that this was just an illusion, it had utterly shocked Xiang Zilong.

The new Prefecture Master was so powerful!

"Aahh!"

Xiang Zilong's face became red and his blood vessels started to explode. Between life and death, he unleashed his potential and freed himself from Fang Yuan's claw to his neck. Suddenly, he retreated 10 yards backwards before leaping forward; the shadow of his legs fell like raindrops.

"Dragon Subduing Kick!"

Xiang Zilong was also a Wu Zong and was very experienced. He also knew that he would be dead if he chose to escape. The only way out was to defeat the other person.

Hence, he chose to strike first and the first move that he executed was his strongest technique.

"Crackle!"

The shadow of the leg reached Fang Yuan and started to noise like how raindrops land on leaves. However, Fang Yuan paid no attention as though his opponent's moves were like a gentle breeze. He went forward and struck another claw out!

"Rough technique? Your technique is scarier than Niu Dingtian's!"

This thought ran through Xiang Zilong's mind. A crisp sound was heard and he fell to the ground, crying out loud.

"Peng!"

There was blood everywhere.

Only now did the others watching realised that Xiang Zilong's leg

had already been grabbed and broken by Fang Yuan, and the leg had fallen onto the ground.

In just a few moves, Xiang Zilong, who was well known in the Secluded Mountains and had been a capital leader in the Secluded Mountains Mansion Armed Forces, was defeated?

Not only that, but he was defeated that easily?

Niu Dingtian opened his eyes widely and slapped his cheeks for a few times. He couldn't believe what he had just seen.

"Bring this man away and lock him up!"

Fang Yuan brought out a white handkerchief to wipe off the bloodstains on his hand while he gave that order.

"Prefecture Master, what about these lieutenants?"

At that moment, Zhang Qingfeng were prepared to take down these lieutenants and knelt down to ask for further instructions.

"These betrayers? What more can I say? Just kill them!"

Niu Dingtian's eyes were filled with anger. He was disappointed in Xiang Zilong and these lieutenants.

"Even though they are a bunch of useless crap, there is still some use in them!"

Fang Yuan then thought, "Xiang Zilong had already wanted to betray us tonight. I should use them as baits to lure the soldiers of the Wu Country out..."

"Prefecture Master! Please allow us to achieve something great for you in order to compensate for the sins we have made!"

When they realised that there was hope for survival for all of them, the few lieutenants immediately knelt down and kowtowed.

.....

It was midnight.

Outside the city gate.

A troop of soldiers stealthily reached the city gate with black masks and weapons.

After they mimicked the cry of a mouse for 3 times, they heard something across the city wall and there were a few noises. A small gap opened in the city gates and a lieutenant was revealed behind the gap. "Why are you all late?"

"We were making further preparations just in case!"

The leader of the troop whispered, "How is the situation inside like?"

"The lieutenant here guarding the gate has been taken down by us. The rest of them are on our side. Follow me!"

The city gate was opened slowly and there was excitement in the eyes of the leader. He then led the troop of people into the city stealthily.

As they passed through the old city wall, they were not in the city yet. They would still have to take another path, which was why this place was also nicknamed the Urn City.

"Something is not right!"

Within the Urn City, someone besides the leader cried out loud. "Retreat, it is a trap!"

"Close the city gate!"

"Kacha! Kacha!"

After a few loud noises, the city gate was fully closed and the whole place was suddenly well lighted. Many archers were already pulling their bows and aiming at the troop and started to fire their arrows.

"Hmm? There is a spiritual knight among them? Since he is here, does he think he can escape?"

Most of the people in the troop were either injured or dead from the rain of arrows. Fang Yuan's eyes lighted up and as pounced

forward, he ordered Niu Dingtian to follow closely.

.....

"Damn it! We have fallen into a trap!"

Outside the city wall, the army of the Wu Country had gathered there quietly. Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng was surprised when he heard the noises and cries from the Urn City.

"The enemy have their defences up here. We should retreat!"

General Fei Long looked far towards the city walls and heard a few shouts and killing noises. His face was all tensed up.

"Looks like the noises are not from the successful rebellion of Xiang Zilong, but from their revelation and downfall!"

Wu Wudao was disappointed.

One of the men among that troop was one of his disciples, whom he had cultivated with all his heart and soul to attain the status of a spiritual knight!

However, his disciple was now trapped in the city.

With this, he had the urge to lead all the most skilled men to charge through the city walls to save his beloved disciple.

Unfortunately, his magical weapon, the Flying Leaf, had been destroyed and as he looked at the expressionless General Fei Long and the blind Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng, he gritted his teeth.

Who would have known that this precautionary measure would lead to the death of his disciple!

"This is so strange!"

After the Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng had calmed down, he also had the same question in his mind. "As a spiritual knight, how could he not know that something was amiss before entering the city?"

Ever since they had become enemies with the new prefecture master of the Secluded Mountain Mansion, they felt restrained

constantly and did not know why or how.

Such a feeling was torturous.

The commanders of Wu Country didn't know that Fang Yuan was a dream master and also considered to be an expert in deception and illusions. Furthermore, he had set up these traps personally. Hence, it would be a joke if a recently promoted spiritual knight were able to see through them.

"Pass the order down. We shall return back to base and attack tomorrow!"

General Fei Long ordered his troops to return to base. Before he left, he looked at the city building and had a bad feeling.

.....

"They didn't attack?"

Above the city wall, Fang Yuan gave a cold laugh as he witnessed the troops from the Wu Country returning to their base. "They are really able to endure this. However.....they are in a precarious situation!"

"If we don't counterattack them tonight, it will still be the same tomorrow!"

He stood at the city building, deep in thought.

"Counterattack the enemy tomorrow?"

Niu Dingtian and Zhang Qingfeng were behind Fang Yuan. Although they were convinced of his ability, they were still a little startled when they heard what Fang Yuan had just said.

"That's right. Pass the order down to add more meat for tomorrow's breakfast. Let all our soldiers have a good meal before we prepare to attack!"

Fang Yuan gave a mysterious smile.

Beneath him, there were noises at the foot of the city wall.....

.....

It was the second day. The scorching sun was high up in the sky.

"Men, get the heads of Xiang Zilong and the spiritual knight as a sacrificial gift for the gods!"

Without hesitation, Fang Yuan cut off the heads of the two elemental force experts effortlessly and threw their heads down from the city wall.

Witnessing this, Wu Wudao flinched as General Fei Long gave a huge sigh. Without any reservation, General Fei Long ordered the army to attack the city with all their might.

Even though they experienced setbacks a few days ago, the general still believed in his war tactics.

His ability was still greater than the enemy. If he were to suppress the enemy head-on without fear for anything, Wu Country would surely win the war.

"Rumble!"

"Rumble!"

As the trebuchets were activated, the Wu Country's soldiers were charging straight at the city wall with no fear of death.

Soon, the city wall became like a meat grinder. Both sides suffered heavy losses and there were many bloody bodies piled up. The city wall had turned red because of the blood.

"Reporting! The situation at the west gate is critical. The enemies have already got onto the city wall!"

"Reporting! Critical situation at the east gate. There are heavy losses there and we need backup now!"

.....

The reports came in like falling snow. This was the consequence of having a small army, and there were breaches everywhere along

the city wall.

"Prefecture Master, let me go and help them!"

Niu Dingtian and Zhang Qingfeng knelt down to ask for permission to join the battle.

"There is no need!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand and said, "Order the troops to retreat and fight in the streets!"

"What?"

Everyone was shocked when they heard that order. Once the troops retreated, it would be as though they had lost the battle. Why even bother talking about a counterattack?

"This is an order!"

Fang Yuan glared at them.

Immediately, there was a loud noise coming from the east gate. Then, there were many cheers of 'We've broken through' heard. The soldiers from the Wu Country flooded into the streets of the city.

"The Secluded Mountain Mansion Armed Forces are much more useless than I thought.....Nevermind, it is better this way. This will be more convincing..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head as he looked at the soldiers from the Wu Country, who were given multiple orders to suppress their enemies completely. Fang Yuan gave a smile and raised his right hand.

"Whoosh!"

At every corner of the city walls, the ground started to break. Many flowers appeared, and light was reflected from blades. Within seconds, the nearby Wu Country soldiers were at lost and were soon slashed into pieces.

Outside the city, General Fei Long was stunned. Slowly, he witnessed the entire Cangshan City transforming into a flower city within seconds.....

Chapter 153: Counterattack

"Rumble! Rumble!"

As the ground broke, thick and thorny vines extending their way up like demonic hands.

On the stems, there were many thin and sharp Sickie Grass.

"Chila!"

As the Sickie Grass glittered from its reflection, even the most skilled soldier would die after being surrounded by these menacing plants.

"Slurp! Slurp!"

Brightly-coloured and large Serrated Flowers opened their large mouths and without hesitation swallowed these soldiers in whole; they were immensely satisfied.

As the basis of the formation, the spiritual flowers and spiritual grass covered the entire Cangshan City, gobbling up almost half of the entire We Country's army.

Even the most highly skilled could only destroy one or two stems of the Serrated Flower, which did not really hinder things.

The volume of plants and the fact that they could start growing the moment then landed on the floor and had the special ability to become enraged meant that these two evolved spiritual species became a life-sized human meat mincer.

"Ah... This is..."

Outside the city, Flying Dragon General was confused, and his eyes bloodshot. Seeing the number of casualties from his army, he was infuriated and spat out a mouthful of blood.

Even though the few of them were spiritual knights, they were still no match for the entire Secluded Mountain Prefecture.

This big loss not only destroyed the Wu Country's objective but also weakened their strongest army. Even the country itself might not be stable anymore!

Even he the general was at loss facing such a humiliating defeat. The other leaders were angry too and tried to attack in rage.

"They are rather similar to Serrated Flowers and Sickie Grass..."

As Wu Wudao witnessed the scene, he frowned. "Those two are normal spiritual plants, why would they evolve to such an extent?"

Notwithstanding others, just based on their size, brutality and their fire-resistant ability, they could form up a formation by themselves and coordinate an attack; no one could associate them with the two most normal spiritual plants.

...

"Prefecture Master? What's this?"

Niu Dingtian and Zhang Qingfeng were overjoyed.

If previously they were referred to hopeless and desolate, the strong defence now would mean they would be overjoyed without words.

Not just that, but if they took the opportunity, they might just turn it into a victory!

"This is the spiritual plant formation that I have set up! It is thanks to Yu Xinlou that I am able to set it up to such a scale..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

"This is all Sir's plan, how would I dare to take credit?"

Yu Xinlou hurriedly knelt down and replied.

He was rather surprised. As a businessman, he knew that there were large quantities of spiritual plants here, but they were only normal spiritual flowers and spiritual grass. He was still confused at how they could become so scary.

Fang Yuan smiled, giving them a mysterious feel.

The ability of a [Botany (Level 5)], together with large amounts of spiritual flowers and spiritual grass, as well as with the help of spiritual land and spiritual fertilizer, and the most crucial being the unique environment of a battlefield; all these created a deadly trap!

'Although the evolved Serrated Flower and Sickle Grass are ferocious, they grow extremely quickly and have little to no requirements for the type of land, especially since there were so much blood and flesh to feed them...'

The casualty rate in Cangshan was now more than ten thousand! It was the best greenhouse for these plants.

Originally being quick growers, and with the help of spiritual fertilizer and his [Botany (Level 5)], the entire underground of Cangshan City was already filled with budding spiritual grass and spiritual flowers, as they began to form their formation.

Based on Fang Yuan's current Botany skills, the chance of normal spiritual plants evolving is already very high, especially with such large numbers of plants.

He was still not satisfied and returned to the Green Peak spiritual land to bring along the Serrated Flower King, using him as a central nervous system to control the other Serrated Flowers to listen to its command.

Otherwise, why would these spiritual flowers and spiritual grasses become so obedient and even knew how to ambush? Why would they stay quietly underground and not create havoc outside?

"The Sickle Grass and the Serrated Flower are companions. As the Serrated Flower has the ability to move around, it can bring along the Sickle Grass, and will become scarier than any killing machine might be..."

He had a tinge of coldness in his eyes. "With the help of my dream master's ability, it would be simple to deny detection from the opposing spiritual knights and Wu Zongs, and therefore able to surprise them..."

The city of spiritual flowers and spiritual grasses in front of him had already become a living hell, and even bore fruits.

"Zhang Qingfeng!"

Fang Yuan exclaimed.

"Yes, Sir!"

Zhang Qingfeng replied, full of excitement.

"Regroup the army, and prepare for the counter attack!"

"Yes, Sir!"

The entire Cangshan City was hard to explain.

Because of his specific deployments of the soldiers, Fang Yuan's army did not suffer that much of a loss. Even the guards all the way at the city gates could run all the way into the city and were not affected by the attack. He could regroup an army of around 5,000.

The Wu Country's army, however, sent all their troops to the frontline. After half a day of battle, they had many casualties, and the change in the situation made them lose their momentum. The entire army was destroyed.

"Kill!"

As Zhang Qingfeng entered the battlefield, his intentions were obvious.

The demonic plants avoided the Secluded Mountain Prefecture soldiers, and only chose to attack the Wu Country's soldiers. Both the soldiers on the ground and the general looking from afar knew that the war was over.

"Retreat!"

"Quickly retreat!"

The soldiers who entered the city became the fertiliser for the plants, and the soldiers behind hurriedly retreated like ducks broken away from one another. They just ran without a lead; the only thing they knew was that the further they were from the city the better.

"Rumble!"

The Serrated Flower King would not give up on such an opportunity! As a rumble was heard, vines popped out of the ground and blocked the path of the retreating soldiers, as it enjoyed its food.

"Kill!"

Zhang Qingfeng opened up a path within the spiritual flowers and gave chase. He killed like nobody's business, as though he was cutting grass.

"Retreat! Retreat!"

At this point in time, the Flying Dragon General finally came to his senses.

He had suffered a great loss! There was no hope for any comeback with such a defeat.

The only thing he could do was to retreat and reduce the casualty rate.

"Good beast!"

Wu Wudao and Elder Daoist Xuan Sheng, together with another spiritual knight, began to fight against the spiritual plants.

As he stuck his finger out, the thorny vines crumbled as though a poisonous snake bit it. Not only that, the entire Serrated Flower shuddered and fell to the ground, and in a short moment lost all its life.

"God Killing Finger!"

Elder Daoist looked at Wu Wudao, as though he could see using his eye sockets. He waved his sleeves and sliced two Sickie Grass into bits.

"This is troublesome..."

The vibration from the destruction of these plants made him tense up.

"This spiritual flower and spiritual grass are working together in an orderly manner. They are extremely ferocious and feed on blood... Every one of it resembles an inner force expert..."

Elder Taoist Xuan Sheng sighed. "If we wait here and become trapped within the plants, it would be even more troublesome. If someone of our skill level were to ambush us then, it is likely we would fall for it..."

"We can still deal with one or two of them, but look at the sheer number..."

Wu Wudao had perfect eyesight and could detect the biggest Serrated Flower amongst all the plants. It just swallowed three soldiers and spat out flower buds, amidst all the blood.

As the flower buds touched the ground, they took in blood and grew at an alarming rate the human eye could detect. In a short while, it became a scary entity all by itself, ready to devour more flesh.

Just a single Serrated Flower and Sickie Grass would not do much, even if it was evolved with special traits.

However, if it exceeded a certain amount, the threat level would increase exponentially.

"Who would've known that the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master had this move... Control of spiritual plants?"

In Wu Wudao's heart, his alertness against Fang Yuan shot up.

"Let's make a move, it's time for us to leave!"

As the result of the war was obvious, Fang Yuan called for Niu Dingtian. Together, they rode the Red-eyed White King Bird across the city walls. As they circled the sky, soon after, they were able to locate Wu Wudao and company.

Using their spiritual knight and Wu Zong abilities, these elemental force martial artists had to fight their way out, forming a safe route for the normal soldiers to escape.

One of the spiritual knights was using fire-type spiritual spells.

His spiritual fire was different from that of Liu Yan's; it was black as ink, like black liquid oil burning, and had the ability to decompose anything it came into contact with.

Even if the Serrated Flower and Sickie Grass were fire-resistant, they were still reduced to ashes after coming into contact with the spiritual fire, which showed the strength of the spiritual fire.

However, even that spiritual knight was sweating profusely. It seemed like using his spiritual spells was exhausting too.

"It's you!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

Among the three elemental force martial artists, he had the lowest cultivation level. He had to find the weakest to bully.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

As the Red-eyed White King Bird chirped, its feathers were dyed red as it descended, quick as lightning.

"Die!"

Fang Yuan used his paralyzing scream, which was hard to fend against.

As the spiritual knight froze, an eagle's claw struck towards him. As he awakened from the trance, it was too late.

"Ah..."

He had just enough cultivation to dodge the claw and retreat, but there was already 5 streaks of blood across his chest.

"Die!"

Fang Yuan was merciless as he flew across, striking his leg out this time.

Striking his claw and his leg was a well-planned move which would restrict all the possible escape routes for this spiritual knight. In the next moment, he would take his life.

"Don't be rude!"

As his leg was diverted sideways, the spiritual knight fell back and spat out a mouthful of blood. Suddenly, there was a shadow between the both of them, blocking Fang Yuan from delivering his death kick.

"Flying Dragon General?"

As Fang Yuan examined the middle-aged man in front of him, he began to think of Flying Dragon General.

Only such an experienced Wu Zong would be able to save the spiritual knight's life in the nick of time.

Compared to him, Wu Wudao and Elder Taoist Xuan Sheng were still inferior.

'What a pit I couldn't finish him off, but that is fine too... That spiritual knight is useless now, and can no longer take part in this fight!'

As he glanced at the half-dead spiritual knight, his mood was uplifted, and he scanned the rest of them.

Chapter 154: Resounding Defeat

"Prefecture Master!"

With the interference from General Fei Long, Wu Wudao and Xuan Sheng recovered. They looked at Fang Yuan with intense hatred.

"That's right!"

Fang Yuan smiled. He did not hold them in regard.

The Elemental Force Realm experts were nothing to him.

The situation remained unchanged even though Fang Yuan previously had the protection of the troops. He did not fear these spiritual knights.

He was the king amongst the spiritual flowers and grass!

As for the few aristocrats of Wu Country in front of him? There 100,000 troops were scattered and their strength was unable to be mustered.

The offensive and the defensive were reversed!

...

A gust of foul-smelling wind.

Not far away, the Sickie Grass and Serrated Flowers were dancing. Like a reaper, they claimed the lives of many soldiers.

Wu Wudao, Xuan Sheng and Fei Long felt like vomiting blood after they witnessed this scene.

How can they rely on so few people to conquer Secluded Mountains Prefecture?

Their army had been destroyed and any plan that they had, had turned into a joke.

The mastermind behind all this was the youth that was laughing in front of them. They did not realise that the reason for all his

previous preparations was all for that one moment of attack!

"Good!"

General Fei Long praised, "I have never lost a single battle. To think that my streak would end in your hands..."

"How? Unless you wish to continue?"

Fang Yuan said loftily with no sign of fear.

Wu Wudao was momentarily indecisive.

He still had General Fei Long and Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng at his side. In terms of strength, they outmatched their opponent. However, things were not as simple.

After all, the Prefecture Master was impossible to predict which caused him to worry excessively.

His condition was being suppressed by the Mystical Ice Pill but there was no guarantee that his conditions would not worsen during the battle.

On the opponent's side, Niu Dingtian was the weakest. However, he was trained in rough technique which was enough to harass an opponent. That spiritual beast's aura was also comparable to a martial artist at the peak of the 12 Gates and it had the ability to fly. If it also possessed a few more talents, it would have become a force to be reckoned with... In addition, there was also the unpredictable Fang Yuan...

Given the situation, defeating the opponent was not something that could be achieved in a short amount of time.

Furthermore, they would not be able to stop their opponents from escaping!

Looking at how the situation was developing, he definitely did not have so much time!

If they were unable to swiftly bring down their opponent, they would soon be surrounded by the Secluded Mountain Prefecture

Armed Forces and the spiritual flowers and grass!

If that was the case, it would be their side that perished.

General Fei Long was helpless and did not have a plan to turn the tables around.

"Zhi'Er!"

Wu Wudao arrived at the side of the spiritual disciple who was vomiting blood in a flash. He fed the disciple a spiritual pill and looked at Fang Yuan with hatred.

It was not wise to deal with an enemy without knowing the enemy's ability.

He shouldn't let emotions cloud his thinking even though one of his beloved disciples had sacrificed his life for the country and the other beloved disciple was heavily wounded.

Wu Wudao looked bitterly at the Red-Eyed White King Bird and asked coldly, "Prefecture Master, what are your desires?"

"You entered my territories, killed my people and still ask me what my desires are?"

Fang Yuan was bemused as if he heard a joke.

"It is natural that the strong feed on the weak. Given the situation in Xia Country, if Wu Country did not act, there would still be Yuan, Zhu Country...even you, are you really just a subject of the Xia Country?"

Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng shook his head.

"Hmm...never mind!"

Fang Yuan glanced back at Cangshan City which was beginning to quieten down, "I want all of you to leave the Secluded Mountain Prefecture and swear a blood oath that you would not invade us within the century!"

"A century!?"

General Fei Long furrowed his brows.

He might have agreed readily if it was just a few decades. After all, the army of Wu Country had suffered great loss and needed time to recover.

But a hundred years? That was a bit too long.

"What if we do not agree? Unless you think you can threaten us with your troops?"

Wu Wudao coldly asked.

While they were interested in helping Wu Country preserve its strength. It was not feasible if it was a matter of life and death.

"Of course not!"

Fang Yuan's expression grew cold, "I will only guarantee that none of you will leave the prefecture alive!"

"Haha..."

Wu Wudao laughed. "Do you think you can kill us?"

"I am confident of delaying you till the army arrive and surround you!"

Fang Yuan dusted his shoulders, "If my plans fail, at least I would be able to escape with my spiritual beast! What about you all? Care to try?"

Upon hearing this, Wu Wudao's breaths slowed and he shriveled.

The opponent possessed a flying spiritual beast and was shameless to the extent of escaping if he could not beat them.

What the opponent said was true! If he felt that something was amiss, he could turn tail and run.

Furthermore, he was young and had countless of opportunities for revenge.

As for them, a wrong move would result in their deaths!

If they had really miscalculated, went into battle and did not manage to defeat the spiritual knight cum Wu Zong and his spiritual beast, there was a possibility that they would be surrounded and killed.

In an instant, the three of them hesitated.

They did not have much time to consider as they see their troops being defeated and the spiritual plants slowly surrounding them.

Especially...

Wu Wudao looked at Fang Yuan and Niu Dingtian and saw that they had ill intentions for his disciple.

He knew that once the battle starts, he might be able to survive but his disciple would die without a doubt!

"Prefecture Master...well-played. I concede!"

Taoist Elder Xuan Sheng caved in, "I acknowledge the century agreement!"

Wu Wudao felt grateful.

This matter was grave and as such, either General Fei Long or he could acknowledge the agreement first. If not, there would be consequences.

Xuan Sheng knew that and as such he stepped forward and gave in, knowing full well that he would take the brunt of the consequences.

"If that is the case, I agree as well!"

General Fei Long sighed.

Wu Wudao gave his promise.

"That's good, please leave. I will not be seeing you out!"

Fang Yuan waved and smiled as if he was a good host. There was no sign of mutual hostility.

"The Secluded Mountains Prefecture is guaranteed a century of

peace..."

Wu Wudao's and General Fei Long's eyes met. They sighed and silently walked away.

"Prefecture Master, why not ...?"

Seeing the view of the people disappearing, Niu Dingtian stepped forward and asked.

"Do you have the confidence to kill the three of them? Wu Wudao is the Imperial Advisor of Wu, General Fei Long is the prodigy in Wu Country. Who knows what trump cards they are hiding?"

Fang Yuan looked at him, "How many of our soldiers' lives must be sacrificed with no guarantee of victory?"

Niu Dingtian could not answer and sweated cold sweat.

Fang Yuan closed his eyes. He still had some stuff that he did not speak out loud.

Wu Wudao and his companions readily agreed to the agreement as Fang Yuan had given several conditions that were beneficial to them apart from their current circumstances.

For example, the agreement only applied to the troops and did not govern the martial artists in the Elemental Force Realm.

If he was met with any danger, there was no guarantee that these powerful individuals would not come to cause trouble.

They would definitely come!

However, without this 'loophole', how would he expect that the Wu Country would so readily withdraw?

Fang Yuan was confident of his abilities.

'It seems like from now on, I am another Liu Yan in the mind of Wu Country. I might even be met with more consequences...the more they come, the more I can hone my skills!'

There were benefits to not declaring war.

For instance, Wu Wudao only knew that Fang Yuan was unpredictable and cunning. He would not expect that Fang Yuan had already reached the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm!

He could make use of the time he gained to make a breakthrough in the shortest possible time.

Worldly conspiracies would be nothing if he managed to break through the Elemental Gathering Realm.

...

Summer Sun Prefecture.

"The king order that the Summer Sun Prefecture is part of Xia Country. Today, we specially come forward to reassure the citizens that there would be not taxes in addition to other benefits if you all surrender. If not, you will be charged with treason and executed!"

In front of a city, there was a struggle followed by the raising of a white flag in the face of the army of the Xia Country capital.

"Very well, this is already the third city which surrendered without a battle!"

Xie Lingyun celebrated as she dispatched the troops to enter the city. "Out of the 6 counties in the Summer Sun Prefecture, 3 counties have returned to the hands of the royal family. This is a cause for celebration!"

She had no intention to help Wu Country in this battle.

In the eyes of the Xia Country's royal family, the previous Prefecture Master, Liu Yan, was a traitor and that the Wu Country was greedy.

Being attacked by both sides and the benefits taken away by Wu Country? Only a fool would do that.

After receiving the letter from Fang Yuan, Xie Lingyun ordered the troops to put on a front, while the main body of troops heads towards Summer Sun Prefecture with an intention of making the

Summer Sun Prefecture the property of the royal family.

She had a similar plan for the Clear Spring Prefecture.

"Such a shame...the Summer Sun Prefecture is in ruins..."

As she thought of the devastating scene that she had witnessed on her journey here, Xie Lingyun could not help but shake her head, her face displaying a sign of worry.

'After Wu Country conquer the Secluded Mountains Prefecture, the next step would be to set their eyes on the remainder of Xia Country...luckily it takes time to implement changes. However, Xia Country do not have many opportunities left, especially...engagement...'

To be truthful, it is natural for the royal family to be connected by marriage.

However, Xie Lingyun was hesitant as that would give the other party another reason to take over Xia Country during times of unrest.

"A letter from the Secluded Mountain Prefecture!"

A messenger hurried forward.

"Is it about the defeat of the Secluded Mountains?"

Xie Lingyun could not help but sigh when she thought of the genius who was highly cultivated but lacked practice. The latest report suggested that he had staked everything in Cangshan. Defeat was imminent for him.

"There was a resounding defeat. But it was not the Secluded Mountains and was Wu Country instead!"

"What?"

Xie Lingyun trembled and looked incredulous.

Chapter 155: The Map

"When the heart is focused, the foundations will strengthen..."

High up in the air, a strange black bird spread its wings and glided into the airspace of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. On its back rode a Taoist priest.

Overlooking the huge Secluded Mountain City in the air inspired a sense of awe. The looming city walls, the orderly roads and the dots that moved along them...everything seemed to suggest that the city had left behind the shadows of war. The morale of the people had risen and stabilised.

Most people were fine with simply being followers. Whether it was Liu Yan previously, Fang Yuan now, or even the Wu Country. They farmed when they had to farm, paid taxes when they had to pay taxes.

If one could loosen his iron grip on the domain and rule with more benevolence, the people would definitely praise him to the high heavens.

Currently, Fang Yuan had displayed the ability to fend off the advances of the Wu Country, and had consequently boosted his approval ratings among the masses. As the new master of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, his prestige and authority were increasing by the day.

The priest let out a sigh, for he knew that his lord's schemes were likely to be futile. Besides, the other party was of a surprisingly young age and had unpredictable methods. He could not help but feel uneasy.

At this moment, things on the ground began to get noisy. They had sensed the priest's arrival.

Tweet

Just as the priest was beginning to look wary, a white flash

swooped out of the City Manor with a large screech and positioned itself in front of the black bird.

"What a bird!"

Sitting atop the black bird, the priest could feel the agitation of his mount, and he gave a bitter laugh.

"With the presence of such a bird, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City's airspace is impregnable. My future plans will probably come to naught."

"Do not worry, I am acquainted with your master, and I am not here to wage war either. You can go now!"

The priest spoke to the King of the Red-eyed White Birds, and patted the crown of the black bird. He then slowly descended under the watchful gaze of the Bird King.

"Haha...a friend from faraway, what a pleasant surprise! Brother Mu Li, you haven't been honest with me!"

Fang Yuan stepped out of the Prefecture Master Manor, his arms open in a welcome gesture. He was adorned with a magnificent robe embroidered in dragons and on his head sat a golden crown. He was a grand sight.

"You mock me, Prefecture Master! You haven't been honest with me either!"

Upon seeing Fang Yuan, the priest's bitterness became more apparently.

This priest was a good friend of Liu Yan, and was in fact an agent of the Xia Country royals. He was the Taoist Mu Li.

"Regarding all that had happened before, we both had our difficulties, so let bygones be bygones. You are an esteemed guest. Please do enter my humble abode and make yourself comfortable!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand with a laugh.

The Taoist Mu Li was partly responsible for the death of Liu Yan,

Fang Yuan's predecessor. On the other hand, Fang Yuan barely knew Liu Yan, and had nothing to do with his demise.

Also, Mu Li was here as an envoy of the Xia royals. Thus, Fang Yuan had sent away the people who could potentially make things ugly, like Niu Dingtian. So far, things had gone smoothly.

"Then I shall not stand on ceremony!"

The Taoist Mu Li bowed once more, and looked towards to Bird King with approval.

"This bird has an unrivaled majesty. It will be a great help to you, Prefecture Master!"

Although Mu Li was concealing his identity and was a secret agent, his admiration for the huge bird was true.

It was a pity that the Wind Chasing Falcon had fallen over the Summer Sun Prefecture. With the help of the Xia royals, Mu Li had managed to find this rare black bird, which proved to be an adequate replacement. However, it was still incomparable to the Wind Chasing Falcon. Now that he had seen the King of the Red-eyed White Birds, which was superior even to the Iron-tail Black Eagle, he was forced to accept that his mount was grossly inferior to the Bird King.

"It was simply the workings of Fate!"

Fang Yuan smiled and walked with the Taoist Mu Li into the hall. Two maidservants served the tea and retreated respectfully.

"Sigh..."

The Taoist Mu Li held the teacup in his hand and as he stared into the depths of the spiritual tea, he was overcome by a wave of melancholy.

"Brother Mu Li, you must be here as a representative of the Xia family, I hereby thank you for your trouble!"

Fang Yuan gave a salute by cupping his right fist with his left

hand.

Fang Yuan had previously struck up a correspondence with Xia, and since Xie Lingyun and Lan Xiaosheng were also unwilling to get into the mess over at the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, both parties did not take things too seriously. All was fine.

To them, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture had no chance against the Wu army, and was bound to fall sooner or later.

Except that the Battle of Cangshan City was a disaster for the Wu Country. Fang Yuan had used twenty thousand troops against the hundred thousand strong Wu army and defeated them decisively. Fang Yuan had gained a formidable reputation as a result, and had also drawn up the Hundred Year Agreement to secure his power. After that, the Xia Country to sent out ambassadors frequently so as to maintain good relations with Fang Yuan.

As of now, with Wu Country's defeat freshly imprinted on everyone's mind, no one would dare to offend the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. In fact, they were extremely worried that Fang Yuan would make a move on the Summer Sun and Clear Spring Prefectures, or even harm the Xia royal family.

"We are all friendly, no worries!"

The Taoist Mu Li became solemn as the conversation moved into serious matters.

"So, what is the purpose of your visit today?"

Fang Yuan asked directly.

With the Wu letter of credence, even if Fang Yuan wanted to become a vassal of the Xia Country, Xue Lingyun might not accept it, for her prestige as the ruler would be irreparably damaged.

Of course, seeing that the Wu Country was unable to annex the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was great news to Xie Lingyun too.

"Our Lady is pleased that the Secluded Mountain Prefecture is

self sufficient. Thus, even if the Prefecture intends to become independent, the Xia Country will be very supportive..."

The Taoist Mu Li grinned.

"Oh!"

Fang Yuan laughed coldly.

"So you intend to push the Secluded Mountain Prefecture out into the cold such that we will become a buffer between the Xia and Wu countries? And we will have to help you spy on and fend off the Wu country?"

The Taoist Mu Li's heart sank.

This was precisely the intention of his Lady.

To let the Secluded Mountain Prefecture confront the Wu country while the Xia country could simply provide reinforcements if needed. This would be a favourable status quo.

After all, the royal family had already reclaimed half of the Summer Sun Prefecture, and if they were allowed to rest and recuperate, they would be strong enough to deal with the issues in the Clear Spring Prefecture.

To think that this young Prefecture Master would be this sharp and point out their ulterior motives unabashedly.

"The Prefecture Master is indeed straightforward. This is the plan!"

The Taoist Mu Li nodded. After all, he was a spiritual knight too, and seeing that Fang Yuan had done away with the pleasantries, he would too.

"To celebrate your ascension, our Lady has prepared a gift. It is already on its way!"

'They have no substance!'

The confession of the Taoist Mu Li was most amusing to Fang

Yuan. He now knew that Xie Lingyun was afraid that he would invade the Summer Sun Prefecture and undo the work she had put in to stabilise the territory.

And it was not just him. The Master of Clear Spring Prefecture, Lan Xiaosheng, was probably of the same mind as well.

‘If I chose to interfere forcefully, Xie Lingyun and Lan Xiaosheng were bound to join forces against me, and might even rope the Wu Country into the alliance. On the other hand, if I compromise, there is a good chance that Lan Xiaosheng might fall out with the Xia royals...’

These political mind games were detailed in the history books, and Fang Yuan was well read enough to be shrewd.

"If that is the case, many thanks to the Lady for her best wishes...the Secluded Mountain is in a terrible state, and will not be partaking in military action anytime soon. We will have to count on you in the days to come!"

"That's right! That's right!"

The Taoist Mu Li was elated, but then realised that Fang Yuan had spoken of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture as being the equal of the Xia Country. The arrogance emanating from Fang Yuan was depressing to Mu Li.

"The time I have left is running out..."

Having gotten rid of the Taoist Mu Li, Fang Yuan half-closed his eyes in deep thought.

The skirmish on the Secluded Mountain was a great victory, and had not betrayed his true capabilities. It would be enough to deter potential enemies.

When the situation stabilises, the politicking and espionage will most definitely resume. The impending chaos was unpleasant to

think about.

Not only that, when his foes figure out that he is the second Liu Yan, they might gang up and launch assassination attempts on him.

Fang Yuan did not fear these challenges, but he was tired of dealing with them.

"Why shouldn't I relinquish my authority and live a carefree life beyond the city?"

His position as Master of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was a powerful one, but it also made him a prime target. He was a sitting duck.

Fang Yuan planned to go into seclusion and meditate for a period of time. He preferred initiation to retaliation.

But regarding whether he could bear to give up his power?

Fang Yuan was not perfect, but he believed in his own abilities. In his opinion, power and influence would naturally come along if one was capable.

It did not matter even if he transferred power to his subordinates. No one could take away his personal strength from him. He had the moral high ground too, and there was no one who could really threaten him.

Even if he came out of his seclusion and returned to a tumultuous world, with his cultivation and prodigious botany skills, no problem would be too difficult for him to handle.

To Fang Yuan, his status as the Master of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was a dispensable title.

He was prepared to walk the talk!

Still, before he left, he had to make some preparations.

"Master! I would like to request an audience with you!"

Yu Xinlou and Huang Fu Renhe carried a big pile of scrolls and waited patiently outside.

"Come in!"

Fang Yuan shook his head discreetly.

Ever since he had succeeded to his current position, these men were becoming increasingly polite to the point of obeisance. This created a distancing effect and sometimes, Fang Yuan actually felt lonely.

"Master, we have followed your orders and organised the manor books. We have gathered the maps of the Xia, Wu, Zhu countries...as well as the Yuanrong Grasslands. We shall present them to you now!"

"Mm!"

Fang Yuan chose a scroll at random. This map was made of premium goatskin and had been sanitised to prevent rotting. Still, its borders were covered with mold stains.

Although these maps were created decades ago, they should be largely accurate.

Fang Yuan opened the most comprehensive map, where a triangular piece of land was detailed.

On this continent, the domains of the Xia Country were clearly marked and sat in the middle. Beside it lay the lands of the Wu Country. These two countries took up nearly half of the total land area. In the immediate surroundings were the smaller states of Zhu, Yan, Qi etcetera. Other than perhaps the Zhu Country, the tiny states were no better than the Secluded Mountain Prefecture. They were but small players on the game board.

"The great seas on the three sides of the continent were referred to as 'The Deep' in the historical records. They are said to be endless, with life forms few and far between."

Fang Yuan's gaze traversed over the continent to the northern part of the map. It was a sprawling grassland.

"This is the Yuanrong Grasslands. There lay the Yuan Country, where the people rule over the land with their horses and bows. They live like nomads..."

"To get to the Da Qian Empire, one has to journey through the grasslands. This is the only way!"

Fang Yuan stared at the map, his eyes gleaming.

Chapter 156: Zhu Country

The world was huge, even Fang Yuan at his cultivation level could not comprehend the vastness of the world.

As he examined the rough drawing of the map, his fingers ran through the Yuanrong Grasslands, and as excitement filled his eyes, he let out a long sigh.

To reach the Da Qian Empire, he had to traverse through this grassland, and it was still unknown what troubles or dangers he might face.

Furthermore, based on his current cultivation, it was still not very safe.

He was also not in a hurry to go there too.

"Take your leave!"

As he waved, he dismissed Yu Xinlou and Huang Fu Renhe. With the flip of his palm, the treasure map from the Five Ghosts Sect appeared in his hands.

This was so secretive that he did not intend to let anyone else know about it.

At this point in time, the three-pieced treasure map was combined into one, forming an intricate drawing of mountains. There was also an obvious spot which caught his attention.

"This Five Ghosts Sect ancestor from the Da Qian Empire is not simple..."

While examining the treasure map, he had a complicated look on his face.

After all, this treasure had so much affinity with him. Even though it was split into three pieces and circulated far and wide, he could still gather them together, which made him believe that it was fate.

The 'master's' true identity was also very suspicious.

The three of his disciples had their own accomplishments. The Xuan Yin Metal Corpse Spell could develop the Five Ghosts Sect to such a stage, and as for the Blood Demon, his inheritance was of immoral ways.

"An extremely strong immoral demon? That escaped here after failing in the Da Qian empire..."

Fang Yuan touched his chin. "From the act of not directly passing down this treasure to his descendants, I can infer that there must be risks in this... Of course, treasures can only be obtained from risks, and if it was safe, I'll rather not try!"

...

He was an extremely decisive person. Since he had decided, he delegated the internal affairs of the Prefecture down to his subordinates and split his power, and he seemed unafraid that they would go against him with their power.

Afterwards, Fang Yuan rode the Red-eyed White King Bird back to Green Peak spiritual land.

He wanted to settle the minute stuff before putting down everything to look for the secret place in the treasure map.

As Fang Yuan left the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City, many carts contain valuables and gifts were delivered into the city.

If Daoist Mu Li was still here, he would be speechless. Fang Yuan had already left, so what was the point of delivering all these gifts?

Outside the city gates, in a restaurant's private room, there was complete silence. There was a spread on the table, and a 15-year aged wine was opened as its fragrance filled the entire room.

"The Royal Family of the Xia Country have put in quite a lot of money!"

From a window opening, a pair of eyes stared at the carriages of

valuables entering the city, as it laughed.

It was a young man in silk robes and was around 25 years of age. He had definitive facial features and would leave a strong impression on those who looked at him.

As he said, there was a hint of anger on his face. "Xie Lingyun did not honour her words and caused my army to be destroyed. She deserves to die!"

"Be cautious with your words, prince!"

At the table, there was another person in green clothes. He had a cloth tied around his hair bun, and although his clothes were plain, there seemed to be extremely clean. He appeared to be about 40 to 50 years old and was originally closing his eyes to rest. As he opened his eyes, he had a warm gaze. "This lady has a marriage agreement with our king. Based on the rituals, she is your unwedded sister-in-law!"

As he spoke, the surroundings shook as his energy spread across the room, as though his instructions were absolute.

His level of cultivation was definitely in the realms of elemental force.

"Hehe... My brother wanted to marry this lady in order to facilitate his future plans and make it official... It seems that this lady is immature and does not have a sense of gratitude. Luckily, we will not sit back and do nothing..."

The internal conflict in the royal family might just kill the new bride.

After all, Wu Country only needed an excuse to invade.

"Even if this is so, you should restrain!"

The middle-aged man shook his head. "Considering the fall of our army and the shock it brought to our country, it would be unwise to create more trouble. Even if Xie Lingyun were to delay the date

of marriage, our king can only hold himself back and wait..."

"Delay? This lady is full of pride, that might just happen..."

The young prince smiled. "Compared to her, I am more interested in that young Wu Zong. Cultivating his magic and the path of martial arts at the same time, and is even able to have control over spiritual plants? Wiping out tens of thousands of soldiers?"

"I have done the investigation, it is indeed true... Although there are some restraints on that prefecture, they are nonetheless a force to be reckoned with."

The middle-aged man sighed again. He knew the value of such power. Even the Imperial Advisor, Elder Daoist Xuan Sheng and General Fei Long cautioned against Fang Yuan when they returned to their country.

Otherwise, they wouldn't be here as well.

"The new Prefecture Master's tactics are mysterious, but what is his true cultivation? Based on his progress and potential, he might be at the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm at 50 years old, and able to reach the bottleneck to the Elemental Opening Realm!"

The young prince rubbed the ruby ring on his finger, appearing solemn.

"This talent cannot be comprehended with common sense. However, since they have made the 100-year agreement, it would be impossible to send in large amounts of troops to take over them. The only way is to slowly plot against the prefecture!"

The middle-aged man answered in a serious tone.

No matter how much these two people estimated Fang Yuan's abilities to be, they would never have guessed that he was already at the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm, ready to break through to the Elemental Opening Realm.

"Sir!"

A shopkeeper entered, and in a serious and respectful tone, said, "We have news that the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master has left the Prefecture City a few days ago. The internal affairs are now handed over to Leader Niu Dingtian, Zhang Qingfeng, Yu Xinlou and a few others to settle!"

"This is... weird!"

The young prince hands shuddered. "There is such a person in this world? Who would give no regard to absolute power? Is he not worried that his subordinates would overthrow him?"

"Maybe... Only by doing this would he have accomplishments...."

They were all rather impressed at Fang Yuan.

However, both of them looked at each other, speechless.

Since Fang Yuan was not in the Prefecture City anymore, what use did their preparations here and the spies have?

...

As the news spread, Fang Yuan had already left the Green Peak Spiritual Mountain, riding on the Iron-tailed Black Eagle's back, flying freely in the sky.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The black eagle was unhappy that the Red-eyed White King Bird took over its role, and used this opportunity to showcase its ability. Its speed was indeed as quick as an arrow, and they flashed across the clouds.

"Now, my influence, martial arts, spiritual spells and even my prestige are at peak levels, or should I say bottlenecks!"

Fang Yuan crossed his legs and sat down, staring into space.

Even though the wind was strong, his clothes did not sway a single bit, which appeared weird.

"Being the Prefecture Master of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture is already my limit, and I have attracted many spies as well. I would sooner or later have to reveal my true strength..."

"The only solution is to keep improving myself!"

He clenched his fist and his blood almost boiled.

Xia Country, Wu Country, Zhu Country and even Yuan Country all did not have obvious Elemental Opening Realm spiritual knights coming from them.

If he spearheaded and entered this realm first, he could have ultimate control and a firm footing. He would not have to worry about others plotting against him anymore.

"The equivalent of the Elemental Opening Realm of a dream master is the Illusionary Divine Stage. It is incredibly arduous to achieve this stage. One would be required to reproduce something from the dream world in the real world. Even if it was a grain of sand or a spiritual spell, it would still be counted as an overall success!"

The path of making visions into reality as a dream master was the hardest of all.

"Based on the theory of my 'past life', there is a fixed cycle in everything, but as for the Prominent Divine Stage of the dream world, it is to make 'something out of nothing'!"

Fang Yuan bit his lip. "Maybe not really something out of nothing, but based on my current cultivation, I am unable to understand the mystery of the highest stage."

The end goal of a dream master was always to turn vision into reality.

But in order to make objects and beings with souls, and subsequently the world, such power could not be harnessed by ordinary dream masters. Every object had their own law of nature to follow.

To Fang Yuan, however, this exploration was too deep for him now. He could only follow the instructions from Master Wenxin to slowly enter the Illusionary Divine Stage.

He would only slowly unravel the other mysteries after attaining the highest cultivation level possible.

"To attain the Illusionary Divine Stage, I just need to reproduce some part of my dream world into the real world to be considered a breakthrough!"

"Based on the experience of my master, it would be the hardest to reproduce living beings, followed by spiritual objects, then normal objects. The easiest would be to harness the flow of energy from spiritual spells!"

Even if both were to be constructed by sand, Fang Yuan understood that a body of energy would be easier to create than a real physical body

A dream spells master was very common in the Illusionary Divine Stage.

A dream spells master would create spiritual spells in dream worlds and transfer them into the real world.

Since they create the spiritual spells in their dream world, the elemental energy required is far lesser; they could create any type of spiritual spells and could be conversant in all 5 elements, and were especially good in casting illusions and confusion arrays.

This power would overwhelm the others in the same realm.

But a dream spells master would be the easiest path for a dream master to take to enter the Holy Stage!

The path of a dream master is countless, and the possibilities were endless!

Only now did Fang Yuan truly understand the true meaning in Master Wenxin's inheritance.

...

"Chirp! Chirp!"

While Fang Yuan was deep in thought, the seated Iron-tailed Black Eagle let out a long chirp.

"Mm? We have arrived at Zhu Country?"

Fang Yuan looked down in anticipation.

Zhu Country was a small country. It had 10 counties and were neighbouring countries with Xia Country and Wu Country. However, they were slightly weaker and in the past 10 years, there was no news of any new elemental force martial artists, as though they would be a weakening force.

In comparison, it was rather similar to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture which Fang Yuan was in charge of.

"The 'master's' treasure map points towards the middle of the Drunken Moon Lake in Zhu Country!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

His cultivation had already reached the peak, and any additional consumption of spiritual pills or spiritual rice would not be beneficial to his cultivation. Only by breaking through would his cultivation improve further.

This treasure might do all the difference!!!

Chapter 157: Drunken Moon

The Descent Moon Court was a famous landmark in the Zhu Country. The court was located beside the Drunken Moon Lake. It had 7 floors and was over 30 yards tall. The construction of the court was extremely ingenious. From the top floor, the view of the Drunken Moon Lake was spectacular and had a soothing effect. Inside the court, there were a few calligraphies made by famous scholars. The most poetic one was the 'Immortal Drunken Moon' and was considered a treasure in the court. Not anyone would have a chance to see it.

There was a thin layer of fog gliding on the surface of the lake. The lake was huge and it was home to reeds and other aquatic life. The scenery was mesmerising, and the lake had provided a living for many people. One of the best aquatic products that could be caught from the lake was the Drunken Moon Silverfish. It was a delicacy served in the Descent Moon Court. The dish was carefully made and consists of getting the freshest sections from 49 different Drunken Moon Silverfishes. It was delicious beyond comparison. It was said that tasting this dish would be akin to attaining immortality, and other types of meat would taste worthless in the next three months.

Fang Yuan sat boldly in a suite room. There was a jade white wine pot in front of him and the wine in it was very fragrant. A sumptuous meal was laid out on the table, and one of the dishes was the speciality in Descent Moon Court; the 7 Treasures Sliced Drunken Fish. The slices of fish were thin and transparent. There was also an aroma of the wine from the slices of fish, making it very tasty.

"Hmm.....not bad. This is good!"

Fang Yuan took another slice using his chopsticks and tipped the waitress beside him. "This fish is fresh and tender. With the addition of the wine, it is a complete match and a good

combination. This taste is extraordinary....."

"Master, you are an expert in food indeed!"

After hearing Fang Yuan's praises, the waitress quickly kept the tips and her eyes were filled with happiness. "This is a top quality Drunken Silverfish. This fish naturally has the taste of the wine and it is rare to catch this fish in the Drunken Moon Lake!"

"The Drunken Silverfish?"

Fang Yuan laughed and his eyes glittered a little. "So the fish knows how to drink alcohol?"

"This.....I'm afraid the fishes do know how. Looks like master, you are not here for the Drunken Moon Festival?" The waitress was a little startled as she asked that question.

"The Drunken Moon Festival?"

Fang Yuan casually enjoyed his meal. "Tell me more about it!"

"Yes!"

The waitress was a little surprised. Nevertheless, she still explained it in detail to Fang Yuan.

There would be a few days in the Drunken Moon Lake where there would be a Lunar Corona. During this period of time, wine aroma would come from the lake intermittently, as it reflects the moon on the surface of the lake. Hence, the name Drunken Moon Lake.

During these few days, the lake would have good stuff like the rare Drunken Silverfish and other spiritual animals!

This attracted many scholars and martial artists to explore the secrets behind this. They would also trade here in the market during this period of the year and since then, this had become an annual festival.

"Oh?"

Fang Yuan laughed and said, "So what a coincidence, I've come at the right time. Looks like I am destined to experience this festival!"

"Of course. Master, you are a lucky person!"

The waitress covered her mouth and laugh politely. However, that was not what she thought.

Not anyone could enter the Descent Moon Court. Even though was Fang Yuan was a stranger to the court, the waitresses were ordered to provide a good service to Fang Yuan and serve him good food. So how could he be just a normal person?

Not to mention, Fang Yuan had an elegant temperament and was wealthy.

She was guessing that Fang Yuan must be from a rich household.

Fang Yuan lifted up his cup. Amidst the cooling breeze and the scenery, his mind was running wild. 'I didn't expect....that the location of the treasure was a tourist landmark. The person who made the map, his actions are very unexpected.....However, since he could hide the map from so many people, the method of concealing the treasure might not be that simple. With the festivities around, I could delay a day before heading to the lake to continue searching....."

.....

Since the Drunken Moon Festival was quite famous in the Zhu Country, preparations were made a few days in advance.

As the festival approached, Fang Yuan realised that more and more people arrived at the lake. Martial artists were walking around with swords and daggers, looking ferocious and all tense up, causing many to subconsciously avoid them.

It was nighttime. The moon was high up in the sky and above the lake, there was a layer of thick fog.

The lakeside was very quiet and there were a number of lone fires

burning emerald green in colour, giving one the creeps.

As the number of lone fires increased, horses and cows gathered around. Tents were being set up and the place became like a market. However, to those who had no idea what was going on, it would seem like a gathering of demons.

In fact, it was called the Ghost Market.

Fang Yuan realised that it was just a gathering set up by the cultivation world. This gathering was made mysterious like a cult so normal people would not join in.

"I should take a look at this annual black market!"

Nobody knew who was the one who organised the black market and the people who came were all mysterious. Fang Yuan wore a hat which had covered almost half of his face.

The products sold in this black market had unknown sources. However, there were a few good stuff here.

Of course, there was no guarantee to any of the products sold. One could end up getting a fake product or products that might implicate them with bad blood, and if that is so, one can only blame oneself's bad luck.

"Is it your first time here?"

At the entrance of the ghost market, a few strong men in black were guarding and as they saw Fang Yuan, they welcomed him with a smile.

"Yes.....Are there any rules here when I enter this place?"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered and he was glowing, startling a few of them.

"No rules....just a few agreements that we have to remind you when you enter!"

The leader of the group laughed and explained. "Inside the market, you can either exchange a good with another good, or you

can pay in gold or silver. However, banknotes are not accepted. Once a trade has been made, you cannot ask for a refund. Of course, the most important is that you should not use force on anyone or else you will be severely dealt with."

"Hmm."

Fang Yuan waved his hands and entered the market.

"Big Brother..."

Another man in black beside the leader noticed that Fang Yuan was rather rude. He went forward to talk to the leader.

"Don't harbour any stupid ideas. Are you tired of living?"

The leader's eyes were serious as he berated that man. "We were recommended by everyone to guard this place because we are righteous! It would not pay off to do these meaningless things! Also....."

As he looked in the direction which Fang Yuan had gone, he was feeling a little worried.

Even though Fang Yuan's voice sounded young, the leader was unsure if Fang Yuan was an old master in disguise. No one would be able to help him if he really offended an expert who could use elemental force.

...

This leader obviously didn't know that by being reserved, it saved his life.

Fang Yuan was looking around in the market, surprised.

"A black market indeed. The goods here are of good quality and the prices are rather cheap. The only thing is that no one knows where these goods come from....."

He went past a few stalls and bought a few rare spiritual objects, and was not interested in the rest.

After all, at his current level of maturity and his status as a prefecture master, there were not many things that made him interested.

"Everyone, the Drunken Moon Lake is about to open. There will be numerous spiritual objects around, and therefore is the best time to try your luck. How can you not have a Water Map with you?"

A loud voice was heard from the front.

Among the rather silent market, this voice attracted quite a lot of attention.

Fang Yuan went forward and saw a person wearing a cloak. The person was squatting by the roadside and there was a small stall right in front of him, displaying 3 maps for sale.

"This is the Drunken Moon Water Adventure Map. I have spent decades crafting out this map and I will be only selling 3 copies. Each copy cost 1,000 taels of white silver or any goods that are of similar price!"

He sounded greedy.

"This map is crafted beautifully, but I'm not sure if it's real or fake.....Otherwise, 1,000 taels for this map is not at all expensive!"

An onlooker came forward and took a look at the map. He shook his head and asked, "Is it possible for me to have a look at the complete version of the map?"

"Not possible!"

The man in cloak rejected straight away and said, "Only those who have paid can view the complete version. I am swearing right here that there will only be 3 copies of this map sold this year!"

'Hmm? Indeed a smart person!'

Fang Yuan went forward and realised that the maps were incomplete as the map had missed out many districts. However,

the map was crafted beautifully. There were measurements and legends included, which seemed that much effort had been put into when crafting this map.

However, the possibility of it being fake was very high. It would be too late to regret it if he had bought it and realised that it was fake.

Also, who could fully trust that person in the cloak with just a guarantee from him? After all, the person could make a few more copies and make money from it by selling them.

"What a pity.....if it was just 100 taels of silver, I will take the gamble!"

One of the onlookers shouted.

"I, Jiang... will not lie to anyone. If I said there would be only 3 copies, there would only be 3 copies!"

The man in the cloak was little angry and raised his voice.

"Haha.....since you put it that way, I shall support you then!"

At that moment, the crowd made way and an old person dressed in black came forward. "These are good quality Drunken Pearls. One pearl is worth 100 taels. Can I exchange 10 pearls for that map?"

"Of course!"

The man in the cloak kept the pearls from the old man and passed one copy of the map to him with both of his hands.

"Are you two in cahoots to trick the rest of us?"

Seeing the appearance of the old man, the rest of the onlookers felt even more suspicious and were even more hesitant to buy the map as they were afraid that it might be a fraud.

There were all kinds of people in this Ghost Market.

However, Fang Yuan had a different opinion.

'These two knew each other. The man in the cloak only revealed this fact when he became angry. From the reaction of the old man who had bought the map, it seemed that is rather influential.....Even though he seems to be only at the level of the 4 Heavenly Gates...'

With this thought, he had some assurance with regards to the authenticity of the map. He went forward and examined the map once more.

As he looked, he was a little surprised.

Some parts of the incomplete version of the map seemed to coincide with the treasure map which he already had.

"After all, the Drunken Moon Lake is huge. It will be too troublesome to look for it one by one and now I even manage to find clues here. Looks like I have found what I wanted!"

As he thought about this, Fang Yuan went forward and grabbed a copy of that map.

"Hey friend....."

The man in the cloak became angry, but his hair stood on its ends as though he was facing a ferocious beast.

"Don't worry, I'm paying for it!"

Fang Yuan cleared his throat and tossed him a jade bottle.

"Are these....spiritual pills?"

As the man in the cloak poured the contents of the bottle out, his eyes were wide opened and he let out a cry, and the onlookers were in shock.

Chapter 158: Combined Assault

Whenever Fang Yuan went out, he would bring along a large amount of gold and silver that were befitting of his status. However, it would be easier to make trades with items in the Ghost Market. For convenience, he brought along spiritual pills and objects primarily.

He took out a Muscle Building Pill. Based on the sheen that caused it to shine like a pearl in the dark, it was obvious that it was not common, and possessed a bit of pill essence.

"The pill's carvings, essence and sheen...this is a real spiritual pill!"

The old man, who previously asked for money to purchase the map, croaked, his eyes fixed on Fang Yuan. "To be able to produce spiritual pills, could it be that you are a medicine master?"

He guessed that the person was either a true alchemy master, although the possibility was very small, or an alchemy disciple who could only use the title of a medicine master.

Fang Yuan could not be bothered to correct him!

This pill is known as the Muscle Building Pill. It is able to treat injuries quickly. How about I trade this pill for your map?

He looked at the person in the cloak and asked directly.

"That would naturally be enough. Your pill is worth much more than that!"

The cloaked man immediately bowed.

Although he was usually proud and arrogant, the man could not be haughty in front of a possible alchemy disciple.

"That's good!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and left.

"Shuala!"

The martial artists who were there to see the commotion parted to create a path, their eyes fiery. None of them dared to step forward and talk to him without understanding his nature.

The cloaked man had already started to close his stall and did not want to continue his business.

"Wait, I want to buy that map!"

A martial artist boomed after racking his brains.

"That's right, I will pay in silver and add another 100 taels!"

Another man in black shirt with bloodshot eyes said.

They had finally understood the value of the map which was sought after by a mysterious person and an alchemy master.

"I am happy with what I have obtained today, please leave!"

The cloaked man held the spiritual pill tightly and disappeared into the crowd.

Hindered by the rules and regulations of the Ghost Market, some of the people felt that it was a pity. However, there were others that started to gather.

After all, that was a spiritual pill!

According to what that alchemy master had said, the pill would be a lifesaver at a critical moment!

The inner force experts and the martial artists of the 4 Heavenly Gates were willing to pay the price and shed blood for the pill.

People were willing to fight for just one spiritual pill. As such, Fang Yuan, the purported alchemy master, would face much trouble.

He appeared to be unaware. After looking at a few other stalls, he shook his head and headed for the exit of the Ghost Market.

"Sir, wait!"

The old man who purchased the map rushed forward and said respectfully, "I am Yu Feishui, it is my fortune to meet you today!"

"Oh, a lucky encounter!"

Fang Yuan asked indifferently, "How may I help you?"

Yu Feishui revealed his identity which was famous in this district. It was obvious that Fang Yuan was not a citizen of Zhu Country as he had not even heard of his name.

He was cunning and appeared common, "That right, I have a large number of spiritual ingredients that I would like to present to you as a gift!"

"Drunken Moon Festival?"

Fang Yuan asked.

"You are definitely knowing!"

Yu Feishui smiled, "I know the person that previously sold you the map, his name is Jiang Tianwang. He is familiar with the water and thrived in it. His ancestors made a living out of the Drunken Moon Lake. If they had not met any unforeseen circumstances, they would not be here selling maps."

"What does that got to do with me?"

Fang Yuan asked coldly.

"Every Drunken Moon Festival, the Drunken Moon Lake would produce up to 3 times as much Drunken Fish with the possibility of spiritual fish appearing!" Yu Feishui continued, "This time, I have put in the effort and created 3 metal hull flying ship, and the maps of Jiang Tianwang. I am only lacking an alchemy disciple to be able to use the spiritual fish as an ingredient..."

An alchemy master was second to none in fully utilising spiritual animals and plants.

Yu Feishui understood perfectly that it would be a waste if there was no alchemy master at hand to utilize the spiritual fish even if

they had a good haul.

As such, he looked at Fang Yuan and gritted his teeth, "If you are willing to help, I am willing to share half of my haul with you!"

He bowed deeply after speaking.

Truth be told, half the portion was too much even for an alchemy disciple.

However, Yu Feishui was cunning and was not thinking about the harvest but rather used it as a mean to approach the alchemy master. As such, he was willing to sacrifice everything he had.

"I have heard your request clear, it is just a shame..."

Fang Yuan shrugged his shoulders and mocked him, "I am no alchemy master! Goodbye!"

He waved his hand and walked out of the Ghost Market in big strides.

"What?"

Yu Feishui's mouth dropped open. He felt like giving himself a slap.

He realized that Fang Yuan only took out a spiritual pill and did not confirm that he was an alchemy master. All the previous guesses were his wishful thinking.

Knowing this, he still ran forward and revealed all his plans?

This was not how he normally behave!

'Wait a minute, when I chased after him just now, I only wanted to test him. Why did I reveal the truth and even my name to him the moment I met him?'

Old Yu felt that something was off the more he thought about it. He was in cold sweat.

"Haha...to think that he would be able to get to Old Yu!"

At this moment, a few people appeared at his side, their looks

were ominous. "He must be from another country as he did not even know your name. Rest assured, we will help you!"

They chased after Fang Yuan immediately after finishing the sentence.

Old Yu recognized them as the Long Hair Demons, a famous group of bandits in Zhu Country. It was rumoured that all their members had at least broken through the Death Gate, and they were all united and cunning.

The seven brothers had even managed to escape from a Wu Zong together!

With a strong reputation, they were unrestrained and were notorious in Zhu Country.

"There are to be no fighting within the Ghost Market. However, there are no such rules outside the market..."

Yu Feishui muttered as he looked in the direction that Fang Yuan went.

He did not know why he was not concerned about the youth but was afraid for himself to the point that his limbs started to tremble.

...

"Reckless idiots!"

Fang Yuan had realized long ago that he was being followed.

After all, he flaunted the spiritual pill in the black market and did not display his ability. Was it not to attract the attention of others to tempt them?

Given his current power, they were nothing no matter how many of them came.

He would be able to escape even if they were Wu Zongs and spiritual knights from Wu Country.

Soon after, the Long Hair Demons met their doom.

So what if they possessed a good technique that would allow them to combine their Elemental Force which would in turn rival that of a Wu Zong?

Fang Yuan was no ordinary Wu Zong!

He lifted up the second brother, shook his head and tore him apart.

The second brother was well-built. Under Fang Yuan's hand, however, he tore like paper. Fresh blood and innards spilt onto the floor.

"You are...a Wu Zong!"

The eldest brother did not run away. Looking at his brothers' bodies, he was in utter despair.

They could not beat the person standing in front of him even when the 7 of them combined their strength. Now that he was alone, how could he fight Fang Yuan?

He was filled with hatred!

He had already remembered the features of those experts that should not be messed with from the neighbouring countries but Fang Yuan did not meet the criteria for all of them.

If not, he would not have foolishly took on Fang Yuan and be sent to his death!

"Hmmm, correct guess, sadly there is no prize!"

Fang Yuan used the shadowstep and arrived before the eldest brother. He touched the eldest brother's forehead. "Dream!"

The eldest brother trembled, closed his eyes and when into a deep sleep.

A white fog appeared and slowly swallowed everything in its path...

After a while, Fang Yuan opened his eyes. With a wave of his hand, the eldest brother's head cracked open.

"Long Hair Demons? What kind of stupid name is that?"

He was disgusted and shook his head.

After his dream-building was completed, the martial artists and spiritual disciples who were of the Elemental Force Realm and below were unable to keep secrets from him.

From the dream alone, he was able to delve into the life of the eldest brother, understand his whole family tree and even know where they hid their loot from years of evil-doing.

Of course, he was able to get much more information than that.

From the Long Hair Demons, he noticed the set of technique which allowed them to combine their assault.

After careful examination, he made a new revelation.

"This combined assault technique was passed down for generations. Their ancestor was a common fisherman of the Drunken Moon Lake. It was fate which resulted in him meeting a benefactor who took him in as a servant and imparted this skill to him after he had served for 3 years..."

Fang Yuan stroked his chin. "Based on the timeline, it was very close to the founder of the Five Ghosts Sect. Could they be the same person?"

There was no purpose to further investigate.

What was important was that the technique was now in his hands.

"I have no use for this technique, however, this is not a bad technique to the servants and can be used to guard the house..."

Fang Yuan stroked his chin and wondered if he should impart skills to the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Armed Forces.

While pondering, Fang Yuan dispelled the fog and the misty Drunken Moon Lake appeared before his eyes.

The moonlight lit up the waters.

Fang Yuan touched his nose.

The gentle breeze brought along the fragrance of alcohol. It smelled no difference from the Drunken Silver Fish.

"The lake water carries the smell of alcohol, the moon and the lake meets? The Drunken Moon Festival... is here!"

Chapter 159: Spiritual Fish

In the lake, there were many boats.

Since the Drunken Moon phenomenon, there were many martial artists coming from everywhere and seemed to have gone crazy with the fishermen here, as they all gathered in at the Drunken Moon Lake.

After all, the commencement of the Drunken Moon Festival would mean that the volume of silver fishes would increase exponentially, just like the past years.

Needless to say, among the normal silver fishes, there would be the extremely valuable Drunken Moon Silver Fish.

Once they get any catch, the restaurants by the lake would buy the fish in taels at a standard rate.

With this enticement, everyone ranging from three-year-olds to old folks joined in the craze for fishing. Some even went to the extent of just floating around the lake on a piece of wooden board, without any regard for their own life.

Of course, beneath the large profits earned were lives that were lost; there were countless corpses at the bottom of the lake.

A cultivator would have a different taste.

How would they be satisfied with normal fish?

They were all interested in the spiritual fishes and spiritual objects in the depths of the Drunken Moon Lake, and the Wine Spring Source, which was described in the legends to be able to transform the entire lake into wine!

"Of course, the Wine Spring Source is but a myth, and is likely to be fake..."

Since obtaining the whereabouts of the 'master', Fang Yuan had an idea of his own.

He might even be the one behind the weird phenomenon at the Drunken Moon Lake. With his god-like powers, it was scary and almost made him wanted to return home.

After all, this 'master' was not his own master, who would without hesitation teach him everything he knew. Conversely, the chances of him being evil were rather high, and there might be that danger.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle flapped its wings, creating huge gusts of winds.

As the gust blew at him, Fang Yuan's clothing remained still.

"Old Fish was right. Jiang Tianwang's ancestors used to work around the lake, and his water map was indeed intricately drawn..."

Fang Yuan crossed his legs and sat on the eagle's back. He opened the map which he purchased and compared it with his own treasure map, as he came to a conclusion.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle chirped as it felt a little tipsy from the air full of wine fragrance. Suddenly, it descended and made waves on the surface of the lake with its claws. As he ascended, it had already caught two struggling silver fishes in its claws.

"Mmm?"

Accompanying the struggling silver fishes was a strong scent of wine fragrance, which was extremely mouth-watering.

Fang Yuan looked at the treasure map in his hands, then looked at the water map, speechless.

"The closer I get to the treasure, the more Drunken Moon Silver Fishes there would be. Following, I'm afraid..."

Indeed, at this moment, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle had already

eaten both fishes. As it took aim at another school of fishes, something happened!

"Splash!"

In the splashes of water, a silvery fish of 25 inches jumped out of the lake, right into the claws of the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

Its scales were glittering, and its skin was like jade. Suddenly, it opened its mouth and spit out a stream of water towards the eyes of the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

"Splash!"

This stream of water came extremely quick. The Iron-tailed Black Eagle could only narrowly dodge it, and as the stream of water landed on its neck, a few feathers dropped. It took a slight turn in its flight path and almost headed into the water. Chirps of anger were heard.

The silver fish was extremely slippery. As its shot landed on the eagle, it slipped into the water and with a flick of its tail, it vanished. The Iron-tailed Black Eagle could only let out a long chirp.

"Nice spiritual fish!"

Fang Yuan witnessed all of it on the back of the Iron-tailed Black Eagle. This silver fish had a spirituality of its own, unlike a normal silver fish. It was truly a spiritual being!

If a martial artist were to eat it, he would become stronger. If an alchemy master were to obtain it, he could extract all the essence from it and turn it into a spiritual pill!

Yu Feishui spent his entire fortune making three metal hull flying ships and sent out all his assistants, all for this spiritual fish.

"Spiritual beings are valuable. Based on the size of this lake, there would be a lot of spiritual fishes in it... Maybe it can train up a batch of highly skilled martial artists just with these spiritual

fishes?"

Regardless cultivation or martial artists training, foundation and resources are the most important.

Where do such resources come from? Of course from spiritual beings!

If one was gifted and had enough spiritual objects to supplement, one could follow in Fang Yuan's miraculous footsteps and break all the gates in quick succession.

"Of course, after the Death Gate, the Wu Zong gate would require affinity and a high magical energy. Not every spiritual object had the ability to increase one's magic."

Fang Yuan located a small island and ordered the Iron-tailed Black Eagle to land there and rest. Seeing the occasional shimmer on the surface of the lake, Fang Yuan was lost in his thoughts. "This spiritual fish is not bad. If it can be tamed, I might even try to carve out a pond in the Green Peak spiritual land..."

"Chirp! Chirp!"

After Fang Yuan dismounted the Iron-tailed Black Eagle, it flew to the lake to find trouble for the fishes. At one go, it managed to catch 10 drunken silver fishes, but none of them was spiritual.

On the contrary, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was sprayed at many times by the spiritual fishes and looked embarrassing.

"Haha..."

As Fang Yuan witnessed this scene, he happily joined in. "I'll take revenge for you! Let's go!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

With his help, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle instantly became much more energetic. It took aim at a school of fishes and dashed towards it.

"Splash!"

The school of fish hurriedly scrambled away. At the side, a splash appeared as a spiritual fish jumped out. With a spray, a stream of water aimed straight at the Iron-tailed Black Eagle.

After all, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was a bird, and it would be disadvantageous for it to play hide-and-seek with the spiritual fishes in the water.

"Trying to escape?"

Fang Yuan laughed, as he struck his right hand out and crushed the water stream.

"Whoosh!"

Not just that, his energy was gentle as silk but strong as metal. As it entered the lake, it vanished.

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and used his magical energy to control his energy. Suddenly, he exclaimed.

"Up!"

"Splash!"

As the water surface broke, the spiritual fish which took a shot at the eagle was yanked out of the water, and its tail continued to flap.

This mystical move was a testament to Fang Yuan's superior prowess in giving his elemental energy a form outside his body as well as his developing dream master's skill in probing into memories.

"Ping! Ping!"

With the flick of this right wrist, he swung the spiritual fish onto the island and scanned the lake for more. Together with the Iron-tailed Black Eagle, he managed to catch 5 more spiritual fishes in a short span of time.

"Alright, that's enough!"

After predicting the Iron-tailed Black Eagle's appetite, Fang Yuan stopped catching more fishes and came to the island. He collected some dried twigs, started a fire and began cooking the fish.

The Drunken Moon Silver Fish was a delicacy, the pride of Zhu Country.

He had tried it for himself before at Descent Moon Court, and it was indeed remarkable. Seeing this spiritual fish again, he could not help himself but dig in.

"By smoking the fish, I will remove the fishy stench. Since it already has wine on it, I won't need other condiments... I shall just cook it directly..."

Fang Yuan quickly slit open the spiritual fish's stomach, cleaned it before smoking it over the fire. He only added a little salt to enhance its taste.

After a short while, an astonishing fragrance came from the spiritual fish meat, making him drool.

"Mmm..."

Fang Yuan gave it a large bite and his mouth was filled with the freshness and juiciness of the fish. It was indeed delicious.

"This fish meat is chewy and there is no fishy stench from it. In fact, it has a hint of sweetness in its meat, and together with the fragrance of wine, there is also a small numbing spiciness, good! Delicious!"

As he shook his hands, the fish bones separated from the meat smoothly.

After finishing an entire fish, Fang Yuan licked his lips and started to prepare the second one.

Beside him, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was enjoying the fish too.

After a long while, both Fang Yuan and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle laid on the beach, both full and satisfied.

"Mmm... This spiritual force is therapeutic, with water-type properties. It has a similar effect as the Flame Jade Rice..."

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and rubbed his tummy, as he felt the spiritual energy spreading throughout his body, bringing with it a feeling of warmth. Every pore on his skin was extremely relaxed, as though he was in Heaven.

"After a full meal, let's take a nap before finding the treasure!"

Fang Yuan placed both his hands behind his head, satisfied and completely relaxed.

All the pieces of the treasure map were with him, and there was no one else to compete with him. Therefore, he felt that it was alright if he delayed it by a day or two.

After a short while of resting, his eyebrows twitched as he stood up and examined the surface of the lake.

"Splash! Splash!"

Three metal hull flying ships were riding the waves and appeared in front of Fang Yuan.

These ships were extremely big and the appearance was very unique. It was entirely covered in metal, and there were two gigantic oars on each side of each ship. Even if they were riding against the wind, they could still sail at an astonishing speed.

"Metal hull flying ships?!"

Just by this, Fang Yuan could guess who the ships belonged to.

Seeing a bright red flag with the image of a whale at the fore of the ship, Fang Yuan said to himself in a mocking tone. "What a coincidence!"

"Grandfather, there is smoke there?!"

As the metal hull flying ships approached, they realised the smoke from the island.

"Mm?"

On the plank of the ship, Yu Feishui stroked his beard. "There are no ships here, but there is smoke. I'm afraid that someone might be stranded there. Send some small boats to take a look!"

He appeared wise and seemed to have absolute control over the situation.

However, shortly after, his eyeballs almost dropped out. He saw a black bird carrying a person as it landed on the ship's plank.

"This is... a spiritual bird!?"

Yu Feishui was in disbelief and stopped his subordinates from wielding their weapons. Instead, he took two steps forward and greeted Fang Yuan with respect. "Junior Yu Feishui sends my greetings to you, Senior!"

He knew that he could not fend against this bird, and therefore the person who tamed it must be a senior!

Regardless how young he was, he must be a senior!

"Mmm..."

Fang Yuan chuckled inside, as Yu Feishui did not recognise him. "I've heard what you said previously, and you are indeed kind-hearted. Good, very good!"

Yu Feishui heaved a sigh of relief and looked at his grandchildren with a look of gratitude.

Chapter 160: Spiritual Fish King

"This is my granddaughter. Xiaohong, come and greet senior!"

Yu Feishui was relieved as he knew he that this person was not evil. He immediately pulled her granddaughter out to greet Fang Yuan.

"I'm Yu Xiaohong. Greetings, senior!"

Her granddaughter was about 20 years old. She had bright eyes and a natural cheerful smile. She had two braids, was tall and had a beautiful figure. Her skin was tanned as she was often under the sun.

"Hmm, alright!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands and came to the bow of the ship. "Did you build this ship to catch the spiritual fishes during the Drunken Moon Festival?"

"You're correct!"

Yu Feishui took a few steps forward and continued, "I'm a water explorer. With the help of this ship, I would be satisfied if I can get some inheritance for my future generations....."

Fang Yuan had no comments.

The spiritual energy was limited. In the entire Drunken Moon Lake, this area had the highest concentration of the spiritual energy, which explained the appearance of spiritual fishes.

Fang Yuan had the spiritual bird, and Yu Feishui had the Metal Hull Flying Ship, both of which would attract attention. After a while, there might be many other martial artists would flock here like as if they were sharks who had just smelt blood.

"Grandfather! It's the silver fishes!"

At this moment, Yu Xiaohong stared at the silver lining on the surface of the lake with her sharp eyes and shouted.

"Hmm? Get the metal nets and the spearguns. We shall use the fishing hooks first. Order the other 2 boats to surround this area and don't let any of the fish escape!"

Yu Feishui told Fang Yuan that he needed to leave to attend to his business.

Even though he appeared cowardly in front of Fang Yuan, he was, in fact, smart and capable.

Along with a few exclamations, many sailors began to sprinkle large amounts of fish bait into the lake. They also tossed a huge fishing hook into the lake, with a golden red coloured earthworm on the hook as bait.

"This golden earthworm is a favourite among the silverfish and the Drunken Silverfish.....There might even be a slight chance to attract the spiritual fish!"

Seeing that Fang Yuan was a little confused, Yu Xiaohong explained to him in detail.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Fang Yuan came to the side of the boat and saw a silver glitter on the surface of the water. Many silver fishes had come to feed on the bait.

As many of the fishes snatched to feed on the bait, there were some caught on the hook.

'How could the normal fish bait compare to the golden earthworm? Of course, they would snatch for it! However, naturally, the stronger ones will win the fight! How can the silverfishes be able to snatch the earthworm from the Drunken Silverfishes? And how will the Drunken Silverfishes be able to snatch it from the spiritual fishes? The ones that will be caught on the hook will be the best fishes!'

Fang Yuan looked on and agreed silently.

"Hooks up!"

Yu Feishui gave the order with a calm look.

"Ughhhh! Ughhhh!"

Two sailors started to turn the winch to bring the fishnets back, pulling up many silverfishes.

"Hmm.....most of them are Drunken Silverfishes. We have a good catch today!"

Even though his goal was to catch the spiritual fish, Yu Feishui also wanted the normal silverfishes and the Drunken Silverfishes.

He stared at the fishing line as it reeled in, nervous.

"Whoosh!"

At that moment, the fishing line came onto the surface of the water and there was a 37-inch long spiritual fish on the hook!

Its shape stood out from the rest of the fishes and it was obvious that it was different.

As the fishing line was pulled even harder, the line was rising slowly and was under tension, as it approached its breaking point.

"Grandfather, it's the spiritual fish!"

Yu Xiaohong shouted.

"Hmph!"

Yu Feishui ran to the speargun at the bow of the ship. With steadied hands, he aimed at the spiritual fish and pulled the trigger.

"Peng!"

The speargun at the bow of the boat was, in fact, a ballistic projectile. It was a few inches long and had a metal hook that was chained to the speargun.

As it was fired, a shocking sound was heard and the whole ship

vibrated slightly.

"Pa!"

The struggling spiritual fish knew that it was facing a threat and flicked.

With a light sound, the fishing line finally broke. The spiritual fish flicked its tail and basked under the sunlight as it avoided the speargun, before dropping back into the lake.

"Sigh....."

Yu Feishui sighed and gave another order again. "Spread the metal nets!"

A sailor from the lower decks ran to the upper deck and started waving a flag.

Two other Metal Hull Flying Ships started to surround and spread their metal nets. As the nets slowly combined together, the sailors turned the winch and hoisted the silverfishes caught in the nets.

"With what we have caught, we will not incur any loss. The spiritual fish is too cunning! I'm afraid that that fish will not.....hmmm...."

Yu Feishui was disappointed and approached Fang Yuan. As he spoke halfway, he suddenly stopped and was shocked.

"Hua la!"

Huge waves appeared together with a long silver shadow. This fish was a few yards long and was on the surface of the water. Suddenly, it lifted its head and shot out a stream of water, like an arrow. The metal nets were broken.

"Kacha!"

As the deafening noise was heard, the water arrow struck the metal nets and sparks were formed. A large hole broke open, and the silverfishes fell back into the lake like a waterfall as they

escaped with their lives.

"What...what the hell..."

Yu Feishui rubbed his eyes and said, "It's not even possible for a spiritual fish to break the metal nets!"

"All right!"

From the disruption, Fang Yuan was able to see the gigantic fish's entire body.

It was twice as long as a normal spiritual fish and there was a golden line on its back. Immediately, Fang Yuan knew that this fish was a special one; it was the king of the spiritual fishes!

"It's the Dragon King!"

"The Dragon King is angry!"

Some of the superstitious sailors immediately shouted, and some of them even knelt down and kowtowed.

"Grand....grandfather....what should we do?"

At that moment, Yu Xiaohong was stunned as she looked at the surface of the lake.

She saw a big school of silverfishes gathering around the golden line, and together with other Drunken Silverfishes and spiritual fishes, they formed a humongous school. The fins of the fishes were like tiny waves, undulating.

"Tens thousand fishes are coming! Is the Dragon King really here?"

Yu Feishui was extremely experienced, and yet this was his first time witnessing such incident. Looking at the number of fishes gathered below the surface of the lake, it seemed that they didn't want to leave, but wanted to attack instead. Cold sweat started to form on his forehead.

It was never easy to hunt for a spiritual beast, and one had to

mentally prepare to risk one's own life in the process.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Many fishes followed behind the spiritual king fish and circled around. Waves from the lake started to rise to form a whirlpool, and it started to grow in size.

"Leave now!"

Yu Feishui shouted at the top of his voice and the sailors on the three Metal Hull Flying Ships shouted together. On both sides, the ships started to use oars to get out of the whirlpool.

"Puff! Puff!"

How could the spiritual king fish let them go easily?

Beneath the surface of the lake, many spiritual fishes came together, shooting water arrows at the oars in an attempt to destroy them. Some of the fishes even charged straight at the hull of the ship, producing hitting noises which shocked the sailors.

If their ships weren't the Metal Hull Flying Ships and didn't have the metal boards to protect the hull, the ship would have been destroyed by those fishes and all of them would have drowned!

Even so, Yu Feishui was helpless and in despair as he witnessed the Metal Hull Flying Ships being dragged into the centre of the whirlpool. It seemed that there was no way to salvage this.

"Senior!"

He went to Fang Yuan and took a big bow. "I'm not afraid to die, but I beg of you to bring my granddaughter away with you!"

Yu Feishui knew how the situation was going to end.

The situation had reached a point where it couldn't be salvaged. The only way out was to sit on the Iron-tailed Black Eagle to escape!

"No! Grandfather! I will not go!"

Yu Xiaohong held onto her grandfather's arms and started to tear.

"Hmm...Old Yu, does such a situation happen often?"

Fang Yuan, however, was feeling calm. He was leaning against the railings and looked at the silver shadows beneath the whirlpool.

Hundred of fishes had come to greet their king by forming a whirlpool. This spiritual king fish indeed had the style of being the king of the sea.

"How is that possible?"

Yu Feishui gave a wry grin. "Previously, only a few spiritual fishes gathered together to attack, breaking my wooden ships into pieces.....This was why I spent a fortune to build these Metal Hull Flying Ships. I originally thought that nothing bad would happen as long as we do not enter the Bewildering Fog, but no one has expected this.....Sigh. I guess this is how life works!"

"Bewildering Fog?"

Fang Yuan touched his chin and his eyes glittered. "Tell me more about it!"

At that moment, there were mournful cries everywhere on the ship, as if it was the end of the world. Therefore, Fang Yuan's attitude made Yu Xiaohong furious.

Many of the sailors knew that the only way out was by taking a flight on the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and they surrounded it, looking unfriendly. However, with the respect they had for Yu Feishui and Fang Yuan's mysterious background, they didn't dare to touch it.

Yu Feishui felt that Fang Yuan was a courageous and powerful man. Hence he went straight to the point. "Now, it is the Drunken Moon Festival and there will be an occasional fog. However, this fog is different from any other fog. Whoever sets foot in it will not

be able to make it out alive! Ever since, any cultivators who would see this fog would keep a good distance from it. If one enters this fog in an attempt to catch the silverfish, one would surely die.....Senior, if you want to know more, my granddaughter will tell you more in detail..."

At that moment, the ship had started to list to one side. It felt as though everyone on the ship was going to die along with the destruction of the ship.

"I shall fight him!"

"Kill him and snatch the bird from him!"

Those sailors were mentally tortured to their limits. Seeing how Fang Yuan was able to remain calm, they couldn't hold it in any longer. One of the stronger man with a long face led the other sailors, drew out his long sword and pounced towards Fang Yuan.

"You all....."

Yu Feishui blushed but couldn't do anything to stop them.

No matter how respectable he was as the captain, his fellow sailors would still waver when it came to the decision between life and death.

"Sorry senior, I shall teach them a lesson!"

He still wanted her granddaughter to leave with Fang Yuan, as he went forward and stopped the group of sailors.

"That will be unnecessary!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand. "Little Black! Go!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Iron-tailed Black Eagle took a glance at everyone and swiped them with its wings.

"Kacha!"

Its feathers were hard as steel it had magical strength. Wherever

it swiped, the sailors fell backwards and fractured themselves.

Even metallic daggers and sword were easily broken by its wings.

This scene caused the teary sailors to be stunned.

Only thinking about their survival, they did not care and think much, which explained why they were now stunned.

How would they expect themselves to escape on the bird if they are no match for it?

Chapter 161: Spring Eye

"What are you doing, Zhang Feng, Li Gui? Get over here!"

Yu Feishui shouted.

While the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was engaging the other sailors, he ordered for his most loyal subordinates to 'save him'.

At the same time, while looking at the large bird, Yu Feishui was lost in thoughts.

He thought that he had already overestimated Fang Yuan, but never knew that even his pet would have the ability of a 4 Heavenly Gate martial artist!

Even though he had slight control over the chaos on his ship, the ships were still getting pulled in by the whirlpool, and everyone on the ships was in despair.

It seemed like the situation was fixed!

"Let's go!"

Fang Yuan laughed and leapt on the eagle's back.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle took off into the skies.

"Senior..."

Yu Feishui felt hopeless; he thought that Fang Yuan wanted to escape by himself.

But at that moment, he was utterly surprised.

In the sky, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle let out a long chirp and flew as quick like a black lightning, straight towards the centre of the whirlpool.

"Splash!"

The spiritual king fish was like a real dragon. Among the

hundreds of fishes, it suddenly felt a sense of danger and looked up at the mysterious person above it.

"Pew! Pew!"

It swam to the surface of the water and shot a stream of white glow towards the eagle.

Behind it were ten over spiritual fish which shot out the water stream at the same time too, forming a web of water.

"Avoid it!"

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and tapped the eagle's head.

Manipulating his magical energy, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle seemed to have a premonition of what would happen and dodged the water stream from the spiritual king fish cleverly.

As for the water stream from the other spiritual fishes? At most the cost of a few feathers, nothing more.

"Beast!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle arrived at the centre of the whirlpool, and a large voice was heard from its back.

"Whoosh!"

A shadow of a person appeared in mid-air, and as its right arm stretched out, a large palm appeared, pressing down on the water surface.

"Splash!"

The entire surface of the water was pressed down a few inches, and the whirlpool came to a halt.

In the tumbling waves, the large body of the spiritual king fish was revealed!

"This..."

On the metal hull flying ships, Yu Feishui and company were lost for words.

"Projecting his elemental energy, giving it a form outside his body, and suppressing the lake with one palm..."

Yu Feishui witnessed this scene, and excitement filled his eyes. "This is elemental force! Wu Zong!"

Although he had already long guessed Fang Yuan's identity, he could only confirm it now.

"Grandpa... Can this senior take down the spiritual king fish?"

At one side, Yu Xiaohong held her braids and looked at Fang Yuan's back with much anticipation.

"Even if he cannot take it down, he can at least chase it away!"

Yu Feishui's wrinkles disappeared for a moment as he grinned from ear to ear. He was extremely confident of this martial artist who was able to harness elemental force!

...

"Pew!"

In the waves, the spiritual king fish appeared once more and flicked its tail.

Three blue crystal pearl-shaped marbles flew in the direction of Fang Yuan, making a loud whirring noise.

As the side, many other spiritual fishes joined in, strengthening their attack.

"Mm? Retaliate? Not too bad!"

Fang Yuan transformed his palm into a claw and struck the water.

"Bang! Bang!"

The water marbles exploded in Fang Yuan's claw, making a sound of an explosion. It made him soaking wet, but other than that, it did not have any effect on him.

"Get... up!"

After one move, Fang Yuan shouted, and released fine elemental force from his index fingers into the lake, and he exclaimed once more.

"Splash!"

In the large splash, the gigantic body of the spiritual king fish was dragged out by Fang Yuan.

"Go!"

He rode the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and arrived at the metal ship. With the flick of his wrist, the gigantic spiritual king fish landed on the deck, flicking its tail around.

A few courageous sailors approached to capture it but were shot by its water stream, causing their body to split into two parts as they died a gruesome death.

"This spiritual king fish is good, I shall keep it as a pet!"

A strong gust of wind blew as the Iron-tailed Black Eagle landed on the deck.

Fang Yuan reeled in the fishing lines and set them out again.

"Splash!"

Not long later, 6 spiritual fishes were flung onto the deck. "This is a gift to you!"

"Ah... How can we accept it?"

Yu Feishui rubbed his hands together. One spiritual fish could accelerate the progress of two martial artists. "I don't deserve this credit!"

"I have my uses for you. Don't do anything to this spiritual fish and the baby fishes, I want them alive!"

Fang Yuan observed that the school of fishes had no more leader, and were swimming frantically in all directions. The whirlpool was also settling down.

"Senior, you want to... keep them as pets?"

Yu Feishui's eyes glittered, but then shook his head and forced a laugh. "It's impossible... So many years of the Drunken Moon Festival and many spiritual fishes were caught, but none of them could be bred. Furthermore, the water in this lake is different from water elsewhere. Even if it could be bred, the spirituality of the fish would be slowly lost..."

An important factor for the survivability of the spiritual fishes was the Drunken Moon Festival, and everyone knew that.

Furthermore, everyone could guess that the secret of the Drunken Moon Lake water laid in the Ecstasy Fog. Unfortunately, the fog was too strong, and anyone who entered it would not be able to come out alive.

"I only wanted to try. Where do you live? I will leave here soon, and by then, I will look for you."

Fang Yuan glanced at Yu Feishui.

Even if he did not threaten Yu Feishui, he would still not dare to be dishonest after Fang Yuan showed off his skills.

Furthermore, a spiritual king fish was not much and was not as important as his own objective.

"Ah... I am the sect leader of Golden Dragon Sect. If you want to look for me, just go to the mountainous entrance of Golden Dragon Sect!"

Yu Feishui was rather depressed.

He had a name for himself, but as he revealed his identity, no one really cared, making him feel like he was a frog in the well.

'Breeding spiritual fish?'

Yu Feishui thought for a moment and continued. "If these spiritual fishes want to survive, legends have it that they cannot leave the Wine Spring. If you can locate the Wine Spring Source,

you might be able to breed the spiritual king fish."

"Pa!"

At this moment, the spiritual king fish started to act up again, flicking its tail and hitting a few well-built sailors. As it scrambled, it arrived at the edge of the deck.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Unfortunately for it, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle was already waiting there. It held it tightly to the deck with its claw.

This spiritual king fish was comparable to a dragon in the lake and not even the Iron-tailed Black Eagle could match it. However, out of the water, it could not use its strengths and was held down.

"Wine Spring Source... Rumours have it that this eye only works during the Drunken Moon Festival, and spread miles away, covering the entire lake with wine fragrance. I need to see it for myself..."

Fang Yuan glanced at Yu Feishui, then to the spiritual king fish. "Keep it properly, and prepare a room!"

...

In his dream, there were raindrops pelting on the lily pads. Like pearls, they rolled into the water.

A silver fish was hiding at the root of the lily flower, playing in the water.

Suddenly, an Ecstasy Fog appeared, covering the entire place, and bringing with it a unique fragrance.

The silver fish was clueless and followed the stream of the water. It did not know how far it had swum, but it arrived at an underwater cavern.

There was a dim light coming from it, and the fragrance of wine was unbearable. It could not resist the temptation and went straight for it.

As it swam deeper, it finally reached the end of the cavern and saw a Spring Eye...

...

"Phew..."

In the cabin, Fang Yuan opened his eyes and spit out a mouthful of breath.

In front of him, the spiritual king fish was held captive in a large tank. It was built entirely out of metal and was extremely strong. However, it was rather narrow and was quick difficult for the fish to manoeuvre freely inside.

Fang Yuan was already very satisfied. After all, this was on a ship, and he could not ask for too much.

"What a spiritual fish, with such complete memories..."

Fang Yuan was very satisfied with the result of this dream accessing.

"Indeed, this spiritual king fish had the assistance of the Wine Spring Source for it to become as such. That underwater cavern must be a natural spiritual land too, however... There is only one such Spring Eye, and it is within an Ecstasy Fog."

Fang Yuan was not surprised at the result, but instead, he had already predicted it.

Even Yu Feishui might know the secret of the Ecstasy Fog, but he was not capable enough to investigate further.

Many martial artists might have attempted to find the secret of the Drunken Moon Lake, but were all met with mishaps as they entered the Ecstasy Fog; they had no chance at all.

However, it was entirely different for Fang Yuan!

"The Ecstasy Fog is like a wall. Humans cannot enter, but animals can... In comparison with the surroundings of the Green Peak spiritual land, Master had also implemented the same defences,

this is a dream master's tactic..."

He sighed a long sigh and his eyes glittered.

He was sure that the 'master' who escaped from Da Qian Empire, set up the defensive fog in the Drunken Moon Lake and started the Five Ghosts Sect was a dream master too!

As a dream master himself, Fang Yuan was much more interested and attracted by the Eye.

"In the legend, is the Wine Spring Source formed naturally or did someone put it there?"

With suspicion, Fang Yuan opened the cabin door and walked to the deck.

"Senior is done with meditation?"

He could see that Yu Xiaohong waited for quite a while, as she brought a bowl of fish soup over. "Please enjoy some soup."

"Mmm."

Fang Yuan noticed that the soup was a pure white, with an intense fragrance. Its taste was also extremely fresh and smiled. "Is this your cooking?"

Yu Xiaohong blushed. "That's right, don't mind my amateur cooking skills."

"Not at all! This is comparable to that from Descent Moon Court!"

There were no added condiments to this bowl of fish soup. Instead, it had the essence of the fresh fish and was completely natural.

Yu Feishui witnessed this scene and was extremely pleased. "If senior is satisfied, why not stay for a few more days. The Golden Dragon Sect will serve you well..."

"That's alright, We all have our stuff to attend to, so why delay?"

Fang Yuan shook his head. "After a few days, I will visit your sect.

Goodbye!"

Without further ado, he leapt on the Iron-tailed Black Eagle and soared into the sky.

"Grandpa..."

Yu Xiaohong looked at the eagle as it slowly became a black dot, and remained silent. Suddenly, she asked. "Could it be that senior doesn't like me?"

"Eh..."

Yu Feishui looked at her granddaughter. Other than admiration, he could see a hint of selfishness in her eyes and did not know what to do.

Chapter 162: The Square

"As the Ecstasy Fog covers the lake, humans cannot enter, but the silver fishes can freely swim through it. This is obviously a dream master's Ecstasy Fog!"

As Old Yu and his granddaughter were deep in their thoughts, Fang Yuan sat on the Iron-tailed Black Eagle's back, full of anticipation.

With the treasure map, water map and the spiritual king fish's memories, there was no way he could not find it.

As the Iron-tailed Black Eagle flapped its wings, a large Ecstasy Fog appeared in front of Fang Yuan.

This was the Ecstasy Fog which the 'master' had placed once a year during the Drunken Moon Festival.

It was totally calm like a wall, which was rather weird for a fog.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle did not care one bit and dived straight into the fog.

"Sleep! Sleep!"

As he entered the Ecstasy Fog, Fang Yuan's consciousness began to waver. His eyelids became heavy, like a thousand tons of additional weight.

"It is indeed a dream master's Ecstasy Fog!"

This scene only reaffirmed his guess that the ancestor of the Five Ghosts Sect was a dream master who escaped from the Da Qian empire!

"Meditative Ceremony!"

Fang Yuan cleared his thoughts and recited Master Wenxin's Meditative Ceremony scripture. In his mind palace, dream

elemental energy flowed throughout his entire body and momentarily took on a strange shape. This caused his consciousness to become extremely clear.

"A fog of such strength, I'm afraid that even Wu Zongs will not be able to awaken..."

Fang Yuan became serious. "If not for my Meditative Tea Ceremony, or my cultivation as a dream master, I might be trapped as well!"

At this point, he was fearless.

Following the strong winds, the Iron-tailed Black Eagle broke through the fog wall, and an island full of greenery appeared in front of him.

"This spiritual king fish's memories point to this place too!"

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes and arrived on the island. He jumped down from the eagle and leapt straight into the water.

"Splash!"

There was the sound of water splashing and there were bubbles all around him.

The world underneath the lake was weird. There was a weird glow, but Fang Yuan ignored it and followed the spiritual king fish's memories as he searched for the cavern.

Not long later, a pitch-black cavern appeared in his vision.

"This is where the Wine Spring Source is... The spiritual king fish was only lucky to have stumbled upon this to become what it is now!"

As a Wu Zong, he had unthinkable abilities.

Fang Yuan could cleverly use his elemental force to take a quick breath at the bottom of the lake.

He took out a Bright Moon Pearl, which illuminated the water

beneath the surface. As there was nothing much, he continued swimming deeper.

The wine fragrance surrounding him became stronger and stronger. As he entered the cavern, the feeling of being intoxicated became increasingly stronger.

"With the spiritual king fish here, other animals would be chased away. After all, why would it let any other animal become like it?"

Fang Yuan entered the cavern and arrived at the bottommost part of it.

There was seaweed all over the rock walls, and the wine fragrance was getting stronger.

If a normal person were to enter this place, he would be intoxicated to death!

"There is indeed a Wine Spring Source!"

Fang Yuan turned his head and looked at a hole in the wall.

The immense wine fragrance originated from the hole, bringing with it a hint of spiritual energy.

"No wonder the spiritual king fish can grow to such a state!"

Fang Yuan was not shocked at all; instead, he was pleased. "Come... out!"

As he spoke, his elemental force was released like a web and it entered the hole.

"Rumble! Rumble!"

Large amounts of wine flowed out from the Spring Eye, as though it was free of charge.

Fang Yuan's expression remained, as he strengthened his elemental force.

From the spring, a burst of spiritual energy shot out. It was intense and was comparable to that at the Green Peak spiritual

land.

At this moment, a grey stone rolled out of the hole. On the surface, it seemed to be covered in moss and algae, but it was still indeed the source of the spiritual energy.

This stone resembled the shape of a wine pot. It was round in the middle, and the spout was thin and long. There was an unending flow of wine coming from the spout.

"Wine Spring Source?"

As Fang Yuan observed, he was dumbfounded and had no other suspicions.

He stretched his right arm and picked up the stone wine pot. His expression changed. "This is really a wine pot... spiritual treasure?"

Rumour had it that among the spiritual knights, there was an equipment forging branch that could create unimaginable spiritual equipment.

However, as compared to normal equipment forging masters, the talismans and magical equipment that spiritual knights made after experimenting on their own were dispensable and trash.

"Bottomless wine pot? What a good spiritual treasure!"

Fang Yuan exclaimed and exerted a force from his hand. The rock shattered into pieces and fell to the ground, revealing the actual form of the spiritual pot.

The pot was neither made of gold nor jade. It had a black exterior, and there was a fine line at the mouth, with a pot cover next to it. When the pot was opened and tipped to one side, spiritual wine began to flow out of it.

"Good treasure, what a good treasure!"

Fang Yuan placed the cover on the mouth of the pot, and the wine stopped flowing out. The wine fragrance slowly dissipated.

"It seems like this wine pot was not deliberately placed here, but

an abandoned spiritual treasure. Who would've thought that it could have such power..."

Fang Yuan's eyes grew, and his fear for that dream master grew as well.

Just by possessing this spiritual treasure, this mysterious 'master' might not be any less affluent than Master Wenxin.

Furthermore, his traces were mysterious and he was likely to be immortal.

If he wanted to forcefully take it, he could not know what would happen to him.

"Splash!"

In the fog, a splash appeared on the surface of the lake. Fang Yuan's silhouette appeared, and with one leap, he arrived at the shore of the island.

He circulated his elemental energy as the water on him started to evaporate.

In the smoke, his clothes began to dry up, as he started to feel comfortable.

Fang Yuan opened the pot cover and drank a mouthful of spiritual wine.

"Whoosh!"

A fiery stream of wine entered through his throat and swirled in his stomach. All his acupoints were relaxed and the pleasure could not be described with words.

"There is more that the wine can do!"

There was no need for any explanation. Its concentration was more than 10 times the normal water.

It only took a mouth for Fang Yuan to enter a trance. As his elemental force shook, he was awoken.

"Good wine, this is good stuff!"

As he praised the wine, he looked at the island.

The island was not a big one, but it was filled with greenery. He could feel a lot of energy signatures from the vegetation, which meant that there were not normal plants.

If not for the lack of spiritual energy, Fang Yuan would have guessed that this was another piece of spiritual land.

"The treasure map and the spiritual king fish's memories all point to this place!"

Fang Yuan sighed and walked into the dense vegetation with no regrets.

"Ssss!"

The forest was creepy as there were weird noises coming from everywhere.

Fang Yuan walked through the forest and suddenly, he saw a large green snake coiled up on the ground. It was breathing in the fog, as though it had the wisdom of a human!

"Get lost!"

This snake was comparable to a [Martial Artist (12th Gate)], but Fang Yuan squinted his eyes and exerted his energy from his body.

"Sssss!"

The green snake wanted to retaliate and adopted a defensive stance. However, as it detected a large amount of energy from its adversary, it retreated, turned around and fled, as though if it was one step slower it would have been killed by the force behind it.

"Mmm, you're quite smart!"

Fang Yuan did not hide anymore, as his energy level shot up!

Why was his cultivation level so high now?

He was not just a martial artist in the Elemental Gathering

Realm, but a dream master as well!

By adding up both of these, it was not as simple as adding their cultivations.

In a moment, a fearsome energy field spread across the entire island. As the large spiritual beasts detected the energy spreading throughout the entire island, they could only scramble and look for a hiding spot.

Those weaker ones could only kneel down and surrender to the strong energy.

"Haha... I am the master!"

As he laughed, he trotted through the island.

With his threat, the other beasts would not there to do anything to him.

"This island..."

After close observation, Fang Yuan had a shocking discovery. "I'm afraid that someone had already done something to separate this place from the real world. Only during the Drunken Moon Festival would this place appear and be accessible. On other days, even if the whole world was searched thoroughly, this place could never be found!"

As he thought about it, the mysterious dream master became increasingly scary.

Fang Yuan bit his lips and arrived in the middle of the island.

There were obvious signs of human interference here. The mountainous ridges suddenly disappeared, as though someone had chopped it off.

On top of where the original mountain ridges should have been, there was a gigantic square laid out in white jade. It had an unimaginable width and there were many carved statues around. Every stroke of the statue was unbelievably real.

Among all these carvings were people, birds, and animals. Their eyeballs were made out of black precious gems, which made them look extremely real, as though they could come alive the next moment.

"Mmm?"

Arriving here, Fang Yuan felt that something in his robes felt extremely hot.

As he took it out, he realised that it was the treasure map of the Five Ghosts Sect!

As this point in time, the treasure map was smoking, and the red marking became a brilliant red with a mild glow.

"No risks, no rewards. Furthermore, it is just a piece of inheritance... Since he had already made up his mind to pass it to the future generations, he must have hoped that someone would inherit it, and therefore it should not be too dangerous!"

Fang Yuan calmed himself down and followed the instructions on the treasure map as he arrived in the middle of the square.

There were 49 statues carved in white jade, and on every one of them, there was some sort of energy holding them down. It was mysterious and seemed like a certain formation.

Fang Yuan based on the instructions on the treasure map, triggered the mechanism and went to the middle of the square.

"If there is a real treasure, it would be here!"

He opened up his treasure map and stared at the shining marks on it, speechless.

"Wuwu!"

Outside, the many statue carvings started to make a synchronised noise.

The treasure map in his hands burnt up, in what seemed to be a response to the noise.

Suddenly, a glow appeared in the middle of the square, straight into Fang Yuan's forehead.

He froze at his spot as his eyes were filled with colours, as he entered a weird dream.

Chapter 163: Two Worlds

It was early autumn, the morning breeze was chilly.

Many youths were gathered on the training ground. They wore simple clothing and were well built. Their faces were flushed and they had a fiery look in their eyes.

In front of them, an eagle-eyed tall instructor was in the midst of lecturing.

"The Yang Family was able to have a position in the Da Qian due to our martial arts and spiritual techniques. Those from the Yang Family would need to undergo tests and train their martial arts skills since they were eight... all of you were less gifted and veered from the paths of cultivation. However, you all can still hone your martial arts! As long as you have broken through the 12 Golden Locks and rise to become a Wu Zong, there is still hope!"

"Of course, being a Wu Zong is not easy. If you are successful, you can minimally become a clan elder and improve the standing of your clan. You will not have anything to worry about!"

The Yang Family was a large clan with strict rules.

The family members were treated very differently depending on their status.

The youths' eyes shone and they stood up straight when they heard that such a path was open for them.

The instructor looked at this scene but secretly sighed to himself. 'I should at least give them some hope!'

It was extremely difficult to undergo cultivation. In his eyes, only a few of the youths standing in front of him would reach the 4 Heavenly Gates. As for being the clan's deacon, it was already impossible for them.

'How are they able to break through the Gates without the

resources?'

The instructor was also a member of the Yang Family. After many years, his mind had become clear.

No matter how gifted or talented one is, without the proper guidance and the resources, one would still achieve nothing. He did not understand this when he was young and had slogged away half his life without being able to break through the 9th Gate. When he was finally accepted into the family of the eldest son, he received a 'Limit Breaker Pill' which enabled him to concentrate his Yin energy and become the instructor of the family clan. Every month, he would have spiritual food. His days were finally becoming better.

'My hardship today is nothing. The quality food I received can be used to give to my beloved son so that he would have a strong foundation and would not have to walk down the same path as me...'

'Speaking of which, even the life of a member of the eldest son's family might not necessarily be smooth-sailing!'

The instructor looked towards the side of the training ground where a thin and weak youth was standing. The youth looked envious.

The instructor sighed before raising his voice, "I will be teaching you the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique today. This technique possesses a strong foundation and dense inner power. When one breaks through the Pain Gate, it will strengthen his inner power beyond ordinary levels. After breaking through to Wu Zong, he would be able to harness Giant Spiritual Strength. It is a first grade technique in Da Qian! This opportunity is hard to come by! All of you should cherish it!"

"Understood!"

The youths shouted. Even their voices were full of vigour.

Outside the training ground, the youth witnessed the scene and clenched his fists.

His name was Yang Fan. He was also a member of the eldest son's branch of Yang Family. It was a shame that he was a b*astard child.

For the Yang Family clan, the first wife and the concubines were treated very differently. The children of the first wife were adored and nurtured to take over the family career and lead a luxurious life.

As for the children of the concubines, they had to see if their father was fond of them. If the maternal side of the family was strong and influential, they would be unfortunate as their lives would be made difficult by their maternal side of the family and at the same time, received no love from the father.

It was unfortunate but Yang Fan had experienced such ill-treatment.

His father was not fond of him and his mother's side of the family made things difficult for him. Even his servant dared to bully him.

When he was 8 and had to take the aptitude test, he was given the wrong timing and missed the test. This caused his father to become enraged. From then on, he was not able to train his martial arts and could only study.

In the Da Qian Empire, those who do well in their studies can become officials. For a commoner, it was not a bad pathway. However, in the Yang Family, without the ability to protect himself, how could he fend off the outsiders?

"I must become outstanding!"

Yang Fan clenched his fists. 'If there is no one to teach me spiritual techniques, I will train my martial arts! Every clan has their own rules. I am also a member of the Yang Family and it makes no sense for me not to learn the moves. The only problem

would be that I would not have the resources and the food!'

Practising martial arts consumed a lot of energy. As such, the disciples of the clan would receive a generous portion of money to buy meat and tonic to nourish their bodies.

In addition, those who ranked the top few would be rewarded with spiritual rice every month.

If they were spiritual disciples, alchemy disciples or dream disciples, they would be treated better and would be provided with spiritual food every day.

It was a pity that he hardly see meat on the table. Spiritual food and wine for nourishment were out of the question.

"The Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique focus on the foundation. Consume more food every day to strengthen the body and the blood! After you all go home today, eat more meat. Spiritual meat is even better! Of course, eating the spiritual pill is a must..."

On the training ground, the instructor's words flowed without stopping.

At this moment, even the youths on the training ground could only laugh bitterly.

They would be able to consume spiritual rice and meat every day for a while if their families become more prudent. But consuming a spiritual pill every day?

Only a member of the eldest son's family would be able to have that thought.

The instructor sighed as he looked on.

Even if one was a genius, it would be because he had a lot of resources.

The second young master of the eldest branch of the family Yang Hu was born gifted. When he was just 100 days old, he was given a

'Tiger Meridian Giant Spiritual Pill' which gave him a strong foundation. There was no question that his inner power was unbelievable as a Martial Artist (8th Gate). He had once defeated 10 martial artists of the Yin and Yang Gates, and after that took on a martial artist (11th gate) without signs of fatigue. He was known as the number 1 martial artist of the younger generation of the Yang Family.

However, he was not truly number 1 in ranking as there were still cultivators!

The eldest young master of the eldest branch of the family and the third missy were extremely gifted. They had already broken through the spiritual disciple realm when they were 15 to 16 years old. This was especially so for the young master who was rumoured to attack a spiritual knight and was on the verge of reaching the status of a spiritual knight!

'The eldest branch of the family produced many talents. As compared to them, the fourth young master is very common...no, insignificant....since I have chosen to be with them, I should be loyal, this Yang Fan...'

The instructor glanced at Yang Fan and saw that he had not left. He gave a sigh. He purposely raised his voice and explained the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique much more meticulously than before.

'Hmmm? He does not have good intention!?'

If he was an ordinary youth, he would think that the instructor was sincerely imparting the knowledge and would feel grateful.

However, Yang Fan did not know why, but he was more sensitive to the moods of people as compared to other people and could tell that the instructor was harbouring some ill-intent. It was as if Yang Fan could hear the voice in his heart.

'Practicing of martial arts require resources! If I rashly practice, I

would only harm my body! Furthermore...while the clan does not prohibit people from practising, my father only allowed me to study. What if he realized that I was secretly training? I am afraid that I will receive another beating!'

Yang Fan turned and left the training ground after he thought about it.

"Hmmm? This is strange!"

The instructor lowered his voice and smirked as he saw Yang Fan left.

So what if there were consequences? He just wanted to show that he was loyal!

...

Yang Fan returned to his room. He looked at the bleak walls and laughed bitterly.

His other brothers had their own yards and servants to tend to them even though they were b*astard children as well. As for him, he even had to make his own curtains.

"At least my fifth and sixth brother knew who their mother was, but me..."

Yang Fan was silent.

While his two younger brothers were born to a servant, the servant was promoted and became a concubine of his father.

As for his own mother, she was...missing!

Truth be told, it was a very odd and disgraceful matter, especially for his father who was the eldest son of the family.

It was precisely because of this that he received no love from his relatives. If not for the ranking, no one would realise that the eldest branch of the family had a fourth young master.

The run downed room was cold as there was nothing to block the

autumn breeze.

Yang Fan flipped open the book on the table and glanced at it before closing it and sighed, "6 years of studying. It would be great if I can take the exams and become an official after 3 years. Maybe I would be able to achieve some glory and help with the family affairs. I would marry a virtuous wife and just like that, half my life would pass...but I am not willing!"

He was angry and his eyes flashed. "Why is it that we are all part of the Yang family but are treated so differently? When I was young, I was even bullied by the servants and when I grow up, I would have to beg [my brothers and mother](#). What kind of joke is this?"

"I want to practice martial arts, I want to undergo cultivation. One day, I will overpower the Yang Family, question my father why I was treated like this and find out my mother's location!"

In the run-downed house, the youth clenched his fists with a determined look.

Bang!

At this moment, the door was pushed open and a lady walked in.

This lady was around 40 years old. She was elegant and wore a lot of jewellery. Next to her stood a large servant who was carrying a blue-eyed Golden Silk Cat. The material of the clothes she wore was much better than Yang Fan.

"I have met Mother before!"

Yang Fan's heart dropped as he bowed.

This lady was his father's rightful wife, Lady Wang, who had given birth to 2 boys and 1 girl. Her position in the house was firm and she grasped the power to execute people.

"You unfilial son, what have you done today? Do dare to not listen to your father's teaching? Hmm?"

Lady Wang said with a murderous aura.

Yang Fan quivered. It was as if he saw the silhouette of the instructor and could only admit, "I was walking past the training ground where I stopped for a while out of curiosity. Please forgive me, mother!"

"Very well, you admit? Housekeeper, give him 10 whips as a warning to the others!"

After Lady Wang gave the order, she turned around to walk out of the door.

She could deal with this b*astard child with just a word.

Behind her, the sound of the leather whip rang, leaving a bloody wound on Yang Fan's back.

In the midst of fiery pain, his magical will started to return. 'This must be avenged...wait a minute, who am I? Why am I here?'

With this thought, he had a sudden realization. "I am not Yang Fan, I am Fang Yuan!"

He is not referring to the person that give birth to him but his father's first wife.

Chapter 164: Bastard

"Fourth Master, know your place!"

After the housekeeper and servants punished him, they walked away proudly.

Fang Yuan laid on the bed; his mind was messed up.

After a long while, his true 'self' finally awoken, and retained all of Yang Fan's memories.

"Sss..."

As he flipped around, his back was burning from the wounds, making him take in a deep breath as he almost blurted out vulgarities.

"Getting spanked just after being lucid, what luck..."

Fang Yuan shook his head and was rather appreciative. "If not for this spanking, I don't know when I would become lucid as well, so it may very well be good luck too..."

He scanned his surroundings and gathered his consciousness. "Is this the test left behind by the Five Ghosts Sect ancestor?"

"Dream Building!"

To a dream master, it was a basic skill to be able to change a dream world.

However, as Fang Yuan tried, he was left in shock. "What's wrong?"

As he realised, he took too long to awaken from this dream world.

"I cannot use my dream master abilities! Could it be because the dream master of this dream world has a higher cultivation level than me?"

Fang Yuan looked around. "Then what is the difference between

this dream world and the real world?"

The happenings in this dream world were vastly different from the dream worlds Fang Yuan had.

The most important thing was that it felt extremely real!

"I am afraid that the laws of this world are the same as that of reality!"

He became serious, as he knew what this meant.

"To transform a dream world into reality, he must be at least in the Prominent Divine Stage! Did he leave this dream world here as a test?"

Fang Yuan started to think deeper.

This dream world was too real. If he were to remain trapped in here, the consequences would be dire.

If he wanted to leave this dream, how could he do it?

"To leave a dream world, there are two ways aside from dying; to follow the flow or to oppose the flow. This is not my dream world, so death is not an option! As for 'opposing the flow', it would be to forcefully take control of the whole dream world which will allow me to come and go as I please. However, my cultivation is not as strong as this dream master's, so this is not viable!"

"That leaves me with the option of 'going with the flow'! The main idea is to be open-minded and accomplish some wish of the dream's owner... From my analysis of the surroundings, it seems that it is probably something like gaining power and seeking revenge..."

After lying down flat for a while, and as the wounds on his back stabilised, Fang Yuan got to his feet, walked to the study table and opened a book at random. "Computing?"

From his retained memories, the Da Qian empire based itself on martial arts. Even if it were literature examinations, there would

not be much discussion about it. On the other hand, they were more biased to practical skills, calculations, geography, livelihood, and these were a must-test.

The dream owner studied hard for the Imperial Examination, and now Fang Yuan felt that he was rather confident in passing and becoming a clerk.

This Imperial Examination was for the recruitment of clerks. There was no such thing as becoming an official straight away. Everything had to start small!

"This is the Da Qian Empire... Even their systems are much more advanced than Xia Country's....."

Thinking about Xia, Zhu and the other countries, or the clans, factions or sects that fight with each other, Fang Yuan rolled his eyes.

"This might be the real memory of that Five Ghosts Sect ancestor, which will help me a lot!"

Fang Yuan thought about other things.

He wanted to visit the Da Qian Empire. However, he had not taken over the unlucky Yang Fan's memories, and there were not many problems with the written language or the spoken language.

Furthermore, the information this young man was receiving was rather complete, which would allow him to have a more intuitive understanding of the Da Qian Empire.

"Also, this real dream world shall be a role model for me to follow!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as he observed the arrangement of the surroundings.

In order for a dream master to attain the Prominent Divine Stage, they would first have to learn how to make things real.

To be able to influence objects with his mind, influence reality

with his consciousness, and transfer objects from the dream world into the real world, the first step was for him to adjust his personal dream world to make it as though it was a real world, where the same laws were applicable.

This dream world was a benchmark he could follow.

"Even if there is no treasure, this is still worth it! Of course... it would be better without the other two weaknesses...."

He took in a deep breath.

It was extremely dangerous to explore the dream world.

The death in the dream would endanger the life of the real body! Secondly, being trapped and unable to escape the dream would let the real body die of hunger!

"The past few dream worlds were from my consciousness, therefore 10,000 years could pass by without much time lost. But now in this world, since it is very real, the rate of time flow is exactly same as in reality!"

Fang Yuan became serious. "In reality, my body is within the Ecstasy Fog, and I am still under the protection of the square, so I should be fine. However, if I am trapped here, my real body might die of hunger... In terms of time, I only have 1 month! 30 days!"

He had already broken through to the realm of elemental force and had unthinkable abilities.

As his body was filled with elemental force, he would unknowingly take in nutrients from the outside world. Within 30 days, he would not die of thirst or hunger.

"But this is my limit. I need to achieve the objective in 30 days, right? Most importantly is that I don't even know the objective, and have to find out by myself..."

Fang Yuan pointed a middle finger towards space. "Really... This is such a weird treasure?"

...

Although the whip seemed to be extremely painful from the outside, he did not sustain many internal injuries.

After all, Yang Fan did not make any grave mistakes for them to use as an excuse to beat him up.

In the run-down room, Fang Yuan flipped a book describing the Da Qian Empire. As he concentrated, he found a map from within, which was like a treasure to him.

After a long while, he placed the book down, rubbed his eyes and laughed. "This body... is too weak! He doesn't even have inner power! He is the most normal person!"

Without a doubt, this difficulty level was as though he was put through hell.

"To train in martial arts, I have my Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique, and the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique. However, I am lacking in time and even more lacking in resources! In fact, the lack of resources is a more pressing problem!"

Fang Yuan touched his chin. "The only way is to cultivate spells!"

It was not easy to learn!

If he wanted to learn martial arts, Yang Fan could observe at the martial arts centre, but to learn to be a spiritual knight, it was impossible!

But this was Fang Yuan, not Yang Fan!

He already had two paths of spiritual knights to choose from! Why would he need to secretly observe others?

"Furthermore, this is most suitable for me!"

The path of a spiritual knight was straightforward. There were only two gates. After breaking through to become a spiritual disciple, the next step would be a huge one!

Otherwise, if he tried to train in martial arts, could he break through 13 Gates to Wu Zong in just one month? Even Fang Yuan was not that crazy!

"Furthermore, to the Yang Family, although a Wu Zong might be impressive, that's it!"

Only until now did Fang Yuan realise the scale of the Da Qian Empire.

Just a Yang Family, nothing much to the Da Qian Empire and yet they could produce 8 Wu Zongs in their line of heritage, with three more spiritual knights. Who knew what else they would have.

Even so, there were only considered impressive in their county, but still did not have the ability to become tyrannical!

"Becoming Wu Zong would only mean that you had the right to speak in the Yang Family, but still could not help Yang Fan achieve what he wanted to!"

Fang Yuan was rather confident that Yang Fan was likely to be the mysterious ancestor of the Five Ghosts Sect.

And he had entered his real memories!

"I cannot learn the Blood Demon's Technique. Let's go back to the old path of a dream master!"

It only took him awhile for him to be decided on his path.

After all, he was most familiar with the path of a dream master, and it placed emphasis on the 'mind'. This path was as mysterious as it could be, and if he had enough experience, it would be rather simple to break through.

"Since Yang Fan became a Prominent Divine Stage dream master in the future, he must have the potential to become a dream master, otherwise how could he become successful just by secretly learning martial arts? The probability of training the wrong way and harming himself would be much greater!"

"Of course, the most important thing right now is to move out of this place!"

Fang Yuan bit his lip.

This Yang Family was a big jail in itself!

With such a large number of strong martial artists, the constant surveillance from his mother, and the many loyal servants!

In this lawful society, they could use many underhand means to deal with him, and he might not even be able to retaliate, otherwise, he would be labelled as an 'unfilial son', making the death sentence applicable!

"I have considered this before deciding not to learn martial arts. The cultivation of a dream master is the one hardest to detect. I'm just afraid that there might be a high-level cultivator within the family that can detect my cultivation... Therefore, it is a must to shift out, and the best excuse would be the examinations... It's coming half a month later?"

As a bastard child, he was pressured everywhere in the household and had no say.

The only solution was to use the name of the Imperial Court to get out of the place, but other than that, he had to depend on himself.

"Fourth Master!"

Suddenly the doors were opened and a servant entered carrying a tray of food. With much disrespect, she said. "Mother has instructed for you to be confined here and reflect about your wrongdoings. Supper is here!"

She took out two dishes of vegetables and a bowl of unshelled rice.

"Reflect about my wrongdoings?"

Fang Yuan frowned, then smiled. "I know, I will reflect on my

behaviour. Please assure my mother!"

The servant was shocked.

Based on her impression, this young kid would likely throw a tantrum, and by then she would have her means to deal with him. Never would she have thought that he would accept fate and not be worked up.

"That's good!"

The servant felt that the Fourth Master suddenly became very mysterious. Left speechless, she carried the tray and walked out.

Fang Yuan rubbed his tummy and started digging in.

Although it was in a dream, his body could still experience hunger, fatigue, get injured, bleed or even die!

What was the difference between this dream world and reality then?

Although the rice was hard and the vegetables were tasteless, Fang Yuan was satisfied and cleared the entire bowl.

"I'm lucky that there's vegetable this time round. Next time, they might give me leftovers..."

He chuckled, made a mental note and looked at his mother's room across. "Not letting me ace the examinations by confining me? Such hatred!"

Chapter 165: Yang Hu

Back in the cottage.

Fang Yuan lay down and seemed to be taking a nap.

In fact, threads of energetic magical energy were gathering between his eyebrows and he was absorbing more energy from the surrounding. The magical energy was just like a dragon hiding in the deep canyon, ready to soar into the sky.

"Even though inner force can be removed and is temporary, the heart is always there! As long as I have the will, it will be forever!"

Fang Yuan got up and felt refreshed.

He already had the mindset of a dream master, and therefore it was not hard for him to overcome this huge step once more.

After all, the condition of his body was extraordinary. Yang Fan was an empath since young. He could know what others were thinking as his magical energy was extraordinary, to the point where it was scary!

Or maybe, since the rest knew about his abilities, they started to take notice of him and treat him badly out of fear.

"As long as I can absorb the elemental energy from the heavens and earth into my body and open up the area in between my eyebrows, mind palace, and sea of consciousness to gather elemental force, I will be able to break through to become a dream disciple.....but I'm not in a rush. Even though a dream disciple is an expert in concealment, there could be experts by Lady Wang's side..... I should take one step at a time."

He slowly trained his sea of consciousness and his mind was very clear. He even relived his past experiences and gained many more insights. Unknowingly, he had already reached the state of peace as stated in the Meditative Tea Ceremony by Master Wenxin.

Achieving peace in the soul would mean that he would be resolute in all difficulties.

This was his current state.

He already had the mindset of a dream master and was just a single thought away to achieving it.

"This is what a dream master can do.....After all, when a dream master accesses a dream, it is a gamble. No one can guarantee what will happen next, hence it is best to only follow their heart!"

With this information, his mind flickered. He directed the flow of elemental energy from heaven and earth towards his back, accelerating the healing of his injuries.

"The imperial examinations is the pressing issue now. Looks like Lady Wang wants to lock me up forever. No, not me! Yang Fan!How much hatred does she have with him?"

Even though the imperial examinations didn't matter to Fang Yuan, that was the only excuse he could use to get out of here.

However, from the way it looked, Lady Wang wanted to lock him up forever. She wanted him to leave a normal life which he would not have any chance to become famous!

It had been 7 days since he was first locked up.

He had absorbed the elemental energy from heaven and earth and his injuries were almost healed.

"I have achieved the requirements of a dream master. The next step for me will be to form my dream elemental force and not the dream miniature elemental force!"

Fang Yuan touched his Mind Palace

The area in between his eyebrows was opened up, which meant that the preparations had been completed and now, all he needed was the opportunity to act.

"If Lady Wang wants to hurt me further, I will kill her and

disappear. This seems like a good idea! However, how should I pass this dream world?"

Seeing the life of Yang Fan, the essence of breaking through seems to lie in the Yang family!

"Furthermore.....there is martial arts!"

As he spoke, his eyes were filled with excitement.

The Xia and Zhu Countries were separated from the rest of the world. Their knowledge was shallow and Wu Zong was the highest level in the world of martial arts for them. However, it was different in the Da Qian Empire!

After Wu Zong, one could explore even more realms and be on par with an Elemental Opening spiritual knight!

The Yang family's Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique was one of the possible techniques to do so!

"Probably... Yang Fan's inheritance is the existence of this dream world!"

With these new learning pointers, Fang Yuan was very happy.

This might be because he was a dream master and therefore the benefits he had gotten from this dream world could exceed his expectations.

"The final inheritance for a dream master will likely be the real dream world which he has gathered from his memories.....No matter what kind of techniques, treasures, experience or connections there are, all these can be passed down fully as an inheritance!"

Suddenly, Fang Yuan had a thought. "Maybe.....Was one of the inheritance that Master Wenxin had left for me one of the dream worlds that he had experienced? Hold on..."

He looked at this seemingly real world and realised that something was wrong.

"There is no difference between the real world and the dream world.....Such a seemingly real dream world filled with complex memories. If all these come together, will they combine? This is one of the risks in a dream world."

Accepting another set of memories might pollute him and even develop a new set of personality and character.

In the previous world he lived in, he would describe it as schizophrenia, but a dream master can leverage on this to experience a whole new life!

"An evil dream master might have a way to make it happen!"

Fang Yuan took note of that and started to sort out the new knowledge he had about martial arts.

"Even for a family that trains in martial arts, a martial arts instructor will only teach the contents of the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique for the 12 Gates. For the method on how to break through Wu Zong and the way to cultivate after Wu Zong, it is a secret and a bast*rd like Yang Fan will not know about it. Yang Hu, on the other hand, will probably know....."

"I have heard from some of the martial artists of the older generations that there are Wu Zongs who are on par with spiritual knights in the Elemental Opening Realm.....That realm is named.....Meridian Opening!"

His eyes were glittering.

The dream world of a dream master was the greatest treasure.

As Fang Yuan was attempting to fulfil the requirements of the dream world to break out of it, at the same time, he was digging out these treasures.

"Talking about fulfilling the requirement, Could Yang Fan have gone to Xia Country after exterminating the Yang family? If that was true, the difficulty level would be unimaginable....."

Fang Yuan shook his head. Even if he was at his peak level, he was of no match for an Elemental Breaking spiritual knight and a Meridian Opening martial artist.

"Yang Fan!!"

At that moment, there was a loud voice which irritated Fang Yuan's ears, as though a tiger had just roared by the side of his ears.

"Kacha!"

The weak wooden door broke open and a strong teenager barged in.

He had thick eyebrows and fierce-looking eyes. He had two yellow cheeks and his forehead seemed to have a few spiritual prints, which formed a character '王'. His moves brought about an amazing power like a tiger reincarnated into a human.

"It's Second Brother!"

Fang Yuan, taking on the identity of Yang Fan, greeted him with his fist. "May I know the purpose of your visit?"

Lady Wang had 3 children, 2 boys and 1 girl. Fang Yuan had no business with them and dropped the formalities.

However, the essence of Yang Hu surprised Fang Yuan.

'He is huge and has Tiger Bones. Rumours have it that he opened a Tiger Meridian too. Indeed, he is very impressive!'

At that moment, Fang Yuan could feel that Yang Hu's inner strength was beyond normal, his body seemed to contain a furnace. Next to his heart, a spiritual pill was constantly pulsating and supplied spiritual force to his whole body.

"Good spiritual pill. Compared to this, Lu Renjia's pills are trash...."

Fang Yuan thought, "With the help of the spiritual pill, if one was cultivating the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique which required strong foundations, one would even be able to defeat 4 Heavenly

Gates martial artist even if one was just an 8th Gate martial artist!"

"Hmm?"

As he saw Fang Yuan, Yang Hu frowned and realised that his fourth brother was different.

Immediately, he became angry and said, "I have reports from my men that you disobeyed Father's order and talked back to Mother? Is your mouth itching? Do you want to lie in bed for a month?"

"This matter.....was already 7 days ago...."

Fang Yuan was speechless at that point.

This teenager waited till now to reprimand him about this matter? This matter was already history. He was heartless, and there might be a possibility that he bothered about this as someone might have tried to fan the flames between them.

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes. He recalled from Yang Fan's memories that Yang Fan was once beaten by Yang Hu till he vomited blood, causing him to lie down on the bed for a month straight.

"So, you still dare to talk back to me?"

Yang Hu stared at Fang Yuan, grunted and went forward.

"Yang Hu!!!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and shouted. "I was ordered by Mother to be locked up in solitary here. You have broken the rules since you broke in!"

"Plus, you are a martial artist and you dare to bully a normal person like me. Furthermore, we are brothers as well. Do you still want your reputation?"

Even though Fang Yuan spoke very fast, it was clear and impactful.

Yang Hu was startled and stopped moving. He hesitated to take

action on Fang Yuan.

He was not afraid of anything in this world but he still considered the strict orders set by her mother.

"You....."

Yang Hu retreated to the entrance before starting to react. His face was flushed as he cracked the knuckles in his fingers.

"Second Master!"

At that moment, a person appeared and stood in the way of Yang Hu. "Fourth Master is right. Plus, you still need to go and greet Mother!"

'Yang Qing!'

Fang Yuan recognised the martial arts coach who talked endlessly on the training ground. He then squinted his eyes.

"Hmph, I shall let you go for now. I will come back and settle this once I'm done seeing Mother!"

Yang Hu said angrily and turned back.

"So sorry, Fourth Master!"

Yang Qing smiled and apologised. He seemed like a good old man. If Fang Yuan didn't know his true colours before this, he would probably be deceived by his honest look.

"Not your fault. It's just that my door...."

Fang Yuan pointed at the broken door and gave an innocent look.

"I will send people to fix this!"

Yang Qing became pale and unsettled as he hurriedly left.

.....

Inside the room, incense was burning and it gave out a spiritual aura.

Lady Wang took a few sips of the spiritual soup, and her golden

nails were shining brightly. As she saw Yang Hu coming in, she frowned. "You went to look for Fourth Brother?"

"I heard that he disobeyed the house rules and so I went to look for him...."

Yang Hu was like a jerk on his own, but like a tamed cat in front of his mother.

"You have already matured, so why are you still being so calculative towards your brother? Don't you want your reputation?"

Lady Wang's eyebrows stood up as she started to scold Yang Hu.

"I was being anxious on behalf of you. Yang Fan was preparing for his imperial examinations. Should I go and break one of his arms...."

"Jerk!"

Lady Wang was really angry this time. "What do you take me as? Since Fourth Brother wants to prepare for his examinations, why should I be in his way? Chun Lan, please go and tell Yang Fan to study hard and prepare for his examinations. Also, send 10 taels of gold to him for his examination fees!"

"Yes, Lady Wang!"

One of the servants left. Yang Hu scratched his head and was confused.

"Little Hu, you can leave first. Ask Yang Qing to see me!"

Lady Wang stroked her golden cat and her eyes glittered.

Chapter 166: Meridian Opening

"Fourth young master, the missus has already lifted your restraining order and have given you 10 gold taels to let you prepare for your exams!"

Chun Lan was around 16 or 17 years old and wore a red dress. When she smiled, two dimples could be seen.

"Help me convey my thanks to the missus!"

Fang Yuan accepted the gold and said indifferently.

"You...hmmmm!"

She stomped away angrily when she did not receive the response she expected.

"How cute...even though she is angry!"

Fang Yuan returned to the house and started to pack up his things. He smiled coldly.

When Yang Hu came looking for trouble, He purposely dragged Lady Wang into the picture.

No matter how hypocritical and evil the person was, she would maintain a kind front in front of the clan.

Lady Wang was not willing to bear the name as the person who purposely prevented the child from taking the imperial examinations.

After all, she had other methods that were more direct and efficient.

For example...generously giving him the money and wait for him to leave the Yang Family before purposely making things difficult for him or even kill him, creating a case with no lead!

"I would definitely die if I was still the weak youth!"

Fang Yuan's eyes were deep and he had an epiphany.

"Maybe Yang Fan never completed the imperial examinations. However, I must be successful and make a name for myself! It is a reasonable goal!"

Truth be told, this was a test to see where Yang Fan's desires lie.

Was it a success or was it revenge? Was it something else?

"I just do not know which rat will come."

After a while, Fang Yuan carried a small bundle and walked out of the Yang Family gate under the malicious gazes.

The Yang Family was located on the outskirts of the county and was half a day's journey away from the city where the imperial examinations were held.

There were carts pulled by donkeys available. However, Fang Yuan chose to walk. He walked slowly and arrived at a dense forest.

"How? Isn't it time to show yourself after following me for so long?"

Fang Yuan took a breath. He suddenly turned around and looked behind him.

"Fourth young master can actually detect me?"

A black shadow walked out. It was Yang Qing!

He had not changed his clothes. He walked out confidently in front of Fang Yuan, fists clenched. "Please forgive me, young master, I am only following orders!"

"You are here to kill me?"

Fang Yuan shook his head.

Yang Qing smiled and his expression grew dark. "How did you know?"

Fang Yuan replied, "Sigh, Lady Wang would be too kind if you are dressed as such to break my limbs. However, she is crazy and no

medicine can save her!"

"It appears that the people in the residence have misunderstood you!"

Yang Qing nodded his head, "Fourth young master, you are as intelligent as the eldest young master and the third missy!"

He slowly moved forward, his palms had already started to gather yin energy.

He had already received orders from Lady Wang and must not fail his task!

Yang Qing became fervent after he remembered what Lady Wang had promised him.

'There is not much hope for me left. However, this is for my beloved son.'

"It seems that you are sure that there is no one around to dare to act here!"

Fang Yuan looked towards Yang Qing.

"That's right!"

Yang Qing appeared to be pleased with himself, "Even if you shout till you are hoarse, no one would come to your help!"

"Why do these words sound so familiar?"

Fang Yuan was speechless, "This can already be considered overconfidence?"

"Overconfidence?"

Yang Qing could not understand what Fang Yuan [was talking about](#). His face showed his desire to kill.

"Huff..."

Fang Yuan exhaled, "Whatever happens here would not attract the attention of the Yang Family."

He touched the space between his brows. In that instant, clouds started to emerge in the surroundings!

Heavenly and earthly energy started to gather to form a spiritual whirlpool which enveloped him.

The spiritual energy in Da Qian was denser than that in Xia Country by a huge margin which caused Fang Yuan to take on a terrifying appearance as a dream master.

"Elemental Force is the force of the heavens and earth! What I have as the dream master is the Dream Elemental Force!"

In his mind, threads of energy from the heaven and earth converged and mixed with the magical energy to form a Dream Elemental Force embryo which once again transformed into a ball of mercury-like Dream Elemental Force.

In an instant, Fang Yuan transformed into a dream master!

Yang Qing could not believe his eyes after witnessing the transformation.

"Impossible!"

He collapsed onto the floor and soiled himself. "Even the young master had not become a spiritual knight...you, you are just a commoner! Yes, you are not Yang Fan but a demon who possessed him! You are dead, once you are discovered, you will be arrested!"

"Idiot!"

Fang Yuan looked at him and waved his left hand.

Huhu!

The Bewildering Fog started to move forward. Yang Qing, who was on the ground, rolled backwards and retreated.

"Oh? It appears that you were only putting on an act!"

His technique was good. While it was unsightly of him to roll around on the ground, his speed was fast as lightning.

If Fang Yuan had been complacent and walked up to him, he would have regretted it.

No matter how good Yang Qing's lightness skill was, he was unable to outrun the fog.

Yang Qing gave a look of despair as the fog surrounded him before it was dispelled.

Fang Yuan walked forward and looked at Yang Qing who looked empty.

He lifted Yang Qing and used shadowsteps to arrive in the middle of the dense forest.

"Dream!"

After Fang Yuan found a cave, he took a deep breath, touched the space between Yang Qing's eyebrows and used his ability.

"This is Yang Fan's true dream world. As the rules of this world is the same as the real world, it means that the living things have consciousness and dream worlds...as such, I can enter their dreams as well! A dream within a dream!"

In that instant, many thoughts flowed into Fang Yuan.

Inside the cave, Fang Yuan's real body was motionless as he delved into the mind of Yang Qing and looked for the information that he was interested in.

"It was really that vicious Lady Wang's idea to send him here!"

"Even though he committed many crimes, he was extremely good to his only child. He only helped them so that his child could have a future..."

...

Fang Yuan looked through all his memories. One memory caught his eyes: In the dream world, within a secret room, an elder spoke solemnly, "Yang Qing, you have broken through the 4 Heavenly Gates. Now it is time to impart to you the part of Qian Kun Giant

Spiritual Technique that is relevant to the Wu Zongs. You must remember..."

...

Fang Yuan went through and remembered all the memories.

After a while, he opened his eyes and smiled. "It appears that after Wu Zong, there is another level, the Meridian Opening Realm!

He had really achieved a lot by entering the dream this time.

Experimenting with dreaming within a dream was only one of the small ideas that he had.

The big idea lied with Yang Qing's martial arts knowledge as well as memorizing them so that he would be able to use them next time!

"The most important stage for a Wu Zong is the Elemental Gathering Realm where they gather elemental force and give it form outside of one's body. In Xia Country and Wu Country, there are many Wu Zongs, including General Fei Long, who are stuck at this stage...In Da Qian, the spiritual knights have Elemental Opening Realm while the Wu Zongs have Meridian Opening Realm! This meridian is no common meridian. Rather, it is spiritual meridian! Since the path to cultivating martial arts had been destroyed, they used elemental force to train their spiritual meridian for cultivation! For every meridian that is opened, the Wu Zong would gain 1 elemental power level.

This 'Elemental Power Level 1' was a unique notion of the Da Qian Empire. It could be seen as the full power of a newly ascended Wu Zong!

"The Giant Spiritual Strength that a person gains after breaking through to Wu Zong using Yang Family's Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique is actually 1 elemental power level! Those who advanced to Wu Zong using the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual

Technique are twice as strong as a normal Wu Zong!"

"That is not all, this spiritual technique can help cultivate 8 spiritual meridians. Even in the Da Qian Empire, this is quite an impressive technique!

The better the technique, the more spiritual meridians that could be cultivated. In the end, you would be able to undergo 'body forging'!

Rumours had it was a change that is similar to being reborn for martial artists. Even the elders had only heard of it and had never witnessed it with their own eyes before.

There were sayings that the more spiritual meridians opened, the stronger the power of the Wu Zong. The divine body forged would also be more terrifying and comparable to the bodies of the deities and the demons!

"The Meridian Opening Realm for martial artists is similar to the Elemental Opening Realm for spiritual knights and the Illusionary Divine Stage of the Dream Master! No one knows what the corresponding cultivation level for Body Forging was either ..."

Fang Yuan had the feeling that regardless of the pathways to cultivation, the end would be extremely frightening.

"What a shame...Yang Qing's memory only had the Giant Spiritual Technique to open the spiritual meridian and did not have the portion of Cast Body!"

This was natural. The higher the level of the technique, the more secrets involved.

Fang Yuan predicted that the last stage of the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique was either known by the clan elders collectively or was only known by the clan master.

"If I want to try next time, and able to procure the whole manual, the price would be terrifying..."

Fang Yuan could not calculate what would happen if the manual was spread to the whole of Da Qian Empire.

"Of course, the most important thing now is that I have a direction for improvement for my martial arts!"

He looked at the unconscious Yang Qing and suddenly pressed him with his right hand.

Yang Qing jerked on the ground and stopped breathing shortly after.

"It is lucky that I left early. If not, I would miss the timing of the exams!"

Fang Yuan walked out of the cave and struck it once with his palm.

Huala!

A small amount of spiritual light appeared on his palm and seeped into the rocks.

Not long after, cracks started to appear. The entire wall crumbled and buried the cave.

Although he would not admit to what he had done, it was better to have lesser troubles.

Without the interference from Yang Qing, the remaining journey was smooth-sailing for Fang Yuan. He arrived at the county at noontime.

The golden rays of the sun fell onto the tall building and added a golden sheen to the walls of the building.

The gate opened and the passers-by bustled around.

"The patrols are mostly martial artists (6th gate) with inner power?"

Fang Yuan's eyes shone.

Just this point alone showed that this city surpassed his Secluded

Mountain Prefecture.

Fang Yuan was using a slang that was relevant to the real world and as such Yang Qing of the dream world was unable to comprehend what he was talking about.

Chapter 167: The Imperial Examinations

"Master, do you need a room to stay in?"

After entering the city, Fang Yuan recalled his way and went to a hotel.

The location of the hotel was a little remote and the sign of the hotel was a little old. However, it was very tidy on the inside and no speck of dust was found on any of the tables and chairs. The antique furniture also brought an ancient feeling to the whole atmosphere.

Of course, the most important thing was that the price for a room here was rather cheap.

As he entered, a humble lad welcomed him.

"Hmm, is the room upstairs available?"

"Yes, of course!"

The lad was smiling brightly.

Fang Yuan nodded his head and booked the room for 10 days. He paid a 3 days worth of rent as deposit. Meals were counted separately.

"You can order whatever you want. If our kitchen doesn't provide, I will be more than happy to get it for you from elsewhere!"

As Fang Yuan reached his room, the waiter told him.

The waiter realised that even though Fang Yuan was dressed normally, his aura was a little different from others. Hence, guessed that Fang Yuan was rich and was travelling on his own, and could, therefore, get tips from him.

"That will be unnecessary. What do you have in the kitchen?"

"You're in luck! Our kitchen has just received two big pieces of

beef and a piece of mutton. Chicken and duck are already prepared by our chefs. We also have the Green Lotus Rice, a type of spiritual rice. Anyone who eats this will have a lasting fragrance of the rice in their mouth. It is one of the popular dish ordered here."

The waiter said everything at one go.

"Hmm, I shall have a plate of beef, two plates of vegetables and a bowl of the Green Lotus Rice!"

He didn't expect such a small hotel to be able to provide spiritual rice.

After a while, the waiter carried a tray out. The sauce from the plate of beef smelled delicious. There was a plate of stir-fried vegetables and a plate of mushrooms with sliced meat. Then, there was a bowl of green rice which filled the air with the fragrance of a lotus. "Your dishes are all here!"

"Hmm!"

Fang Yuan tipped the waiter and signalled the waiter to leave. He then started with the Green Lotus Rice.

This spiritual rice was fragrant and soft, but it was not sticking to his teeth. The fragrance of the lotus filled his whole mouth. Even though the spiritual force this rice provided was not as much as the Flame Jade Rice, it was comparable to the Vermillion Jade Rice. Since this hotel was so small, this was already considered good.

"Just that.....for a dream world, this feels so real!"

Fang Yuan ate another piece of beef and he was thinking about something else. "I'm easily addicted to this dream world."

After a long sigh, he thought about other stuff.

"Now, Lady Wang would have known that something is wrong. It will be hard to guarantee that she will not take any action. I should head to the government office to register myself for the examinations first, just in case!"

The government of the Da Qian empire was richer than the one in Xia Country.

Legend has it that the founder of this empire was so magical and was able to suppress everyone. Even in today, many capable leaders were holding important appointments in the government of the empire. Hence, many of the factions and the rich households still abide by the rules set by the government.

Previously, when Yang Fan had wanted to sign up for the examinations, he probably had the backing from the government officials to go against his family.

However, Fang Yuan wanted to score well in the examinations only because he wanted to find out the method to break through this dream world.

After coming to a conclusion, he left the hotel and went to the city.

The government office was located in the heart of the city. Two stone beast statues were placed at the south entrance. Their heads looked like a tiger's or a lion's, and the eyes of the statues seemed to be glowing. The statues seemed to be alive.

These beasts were called the 'Eye Beasts'. It was said that the eyes could differentiate between good and evil. Hence, the government loved to use these beasts to maintain order in the city.

As Fang Yuan passed by the beasts, he felt something different.

"Magical weapon?"

From the eyes of the statues, he could feel a spiritual spell being cast in them and gave a sigh. The government of Da Qian was indeed spending a lot of effort on such stuff.

"To register, I will have to submit my name, place of birth, appearance, family background and also to nominate another person for guarantee purposes in order to sit for the imperial examinations successfully.....Of course, I'm from the Yang family

and there is an advantage for coming from a rich family. However, I will still have to pay for the examinations!"

As he entered through a small door with other scholars, Fang Yuan gave a cold look. He was already familiar with the registration process but inside, he was complaining about it. "If the government collects fees for every imperial examination back in the olden days, I'm afraid everyone would complain about it..."

When it was his turn, he filled up his surname, his signature and stamped his fingerprint. After making payments, he received a wooden board.

On the board, basic information about him was written on it, including his facial descriptions. He was given two copies of it, and the wooden board was used as an entry proof to the examination hall.

"I have heard that the rules set by the founder of the Da Qian Empire were unconventional and there are many complaints about these rules!"

After he left the government office, Fang Yuan rubbed the wooden board and his face was expressionless.

If this had happened in the olden days, where scholars were insulted with money, some of them would be very grief-stricken and would rather die.

However, this world was different!

Only with strength comes power. It would be strange to see a scholar overthrowing those people with the existence of powerful people like Wu Zongs and spiritual knights around.

If not for the existence of cultivation in some scholars, the scholars probably would not have any power.

"Sir, please stay where you are!"

Just when Fang Yuan was about to leave, a scholar dressed in

green came over. "I'm Xiao Mu. Are you also preparing for this imperial examinations?"

"I'm Yang Fan!"

Fang Yuan greeted him but felt that the expression Xiao Mu was giving was a little strange.

Previously, Fang Yuan did not realise anything strange from him. Now, he could feel a slight dream elemental force from him, and it was in a form of a print.

That print meant that he was under scrutiny from some dream master, and no outsiders could meddle with it.

As Fang Yuan saw the print, he became a little fearful.

"He has piqued the interest of a dream master...."

Fang Yuan released a little of his magical energy and thought to himself. "His potential is great. He is more than capable to be a spiritual knight or an alchemy master, but he is just a few steps away from becoming a dream master. However, he does not seem like he is not looking for disciples, but rather, has an evil intent!"

Spiritual knights can have spiritual servants. Similarly, a dream master can have servants, especially through the usage of this type spiritual prints.

As Fang Yuan looked at Xiao Mu, Fang Yuan pitied him.

Xiao Mu's face was pale. He had panda eyes and eye bags, and it seems like he had not been sleeping well.

"So you are Brother Yang!"

Xiao Mu greeted him and continued, "I admire your good looks and I want to be friends with you...."

"Friend?"

Fang Yuan chuckled and said, "My focus now is to score well for this examinations and I would prefer to study without any

disturbance. If you still have the intentions to make friends, mind if I suggest to gather with a few other friends once the examinations are over!"

"I'm sorry!"

Xiao Mu blushed and bowed apologetically. He wanted to know where Fang Yuan stayed.

However, Fang Yuan gave an unhappy expression and left.

"Hey Brother Fang....wait for me!"

Xiao Mu tried to catch up with him but was too physically weak to do so. After passing a street, he lost sight of Fang Yuan and gave a hopeless look.

Suddenly, he appeared to be in pain and started to touch his own neck. He then went to a small alley and his breathing became heavier and heavier.

"Phew....Phew....."

His face became distorted and veins were now visible on his face. While panting, he exclaimed. "No.....Stop torturing me already.....That man! You felt it for yourself, that man! He will be able to satisfy your needs. Look for him, and leave me alone!"

His eyes became bloodshot. The most mysterious thing was that a green-headed ghost face appeared on what used to be his clear neck, like a tattoo!

.....

"That guy is a big problem for me!"

As Fang Yuan returned to the hotel, he recalled the weird feeling he had gotten from Xiao Mu and tensed up.

If it was any other person, he would have beaten the person till he was unconscious and entered his dream to find out more. However, Xiao Mu had a dream master's print, and he might have the resistance against dream masters. Hence, if Fang Yuan

recklessly entered Xiao Mu's dream, he might walk straight into a trap and be fighting against the dream master who was behind this.

Only an idiot would look for trouble by making a new enemy.

Plus, he was here for the imperial examinations, and not this.

"This man is trouble and is going to be in the same examination room as me. Even if I can avoid him now, it will still be difficult for me to avoid him after the examination.....Alright, I shall entertain him after the examination!"

Fang Yuan yawned and opened his book.

The focus of the examinations was on real-world situations. Since he had 6 years of knowledge from Yang Fan and his own prior experience, he wasn't afraid of this examination.

The only thing he had to take note of was the notes and research beyond the examples of Da Qian. For that, he would have to revise one more time.

.....

Time passed quickly and it was the day of the examinations.

To be an official, one had to start off as a clerk first, and there were many levels for clerks. The highest level would be the supervisor, followed by an orderly, and lastly the service worker. There was a hierarchy to it.

Once one scored well in the examinations, one could directly take up the role of a supervisor. If everything goes well, one would be promoted to become an official of the government. By then, one would have the backing of the government and would be considered the same level as the politicians. With this protection and backing, it was indeed good to be an official of the government. This was why many scholars had come for this imperial examinations.

At the break of dawn, many scholars were already waiting outside the examination hall. Some were carrying lanterns and their writing materials. The richer ones had their servants by their side.

Fang Yuan easily found Xiao Mu with his sharp eyes.

Xiao Mu was in the middle of a crowd and was acting suspiciously. He kept looking around and seemed like he was looking for something.

'What a greedy person!'

Fang Yuan gave a cold laugh.

At that moment, Xiao Mu saw Fang Yuan and gave a happy face. He wanted to come over and to talk to him.

"Dong! Dong!"

Suddenly, along with the sounding of the gong, the door to the examination hall was opened. Two rows of soldiers then came out in an orderly fashion. "It's time. All scholars please enter the hall! Prohibited items are not allowed in this hall. Whoever gets caught will be given 50 strokes of the cane and banished far away from the city!"

"Whoosh!"

The many scholars filled up the entire hall in just a short period of time.

The seats were already allocated long ago, but these scholars still rushed into the hall as though they would lose out if they were the last to enter.

Among the crowd, Xiao Mu was pushed forcefully by the crowd into the examination hall as he smiled helplessly at Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan thought to himself that whoever was friends with him would be unlucky for the rest of their life.

"There will be a physical check. All reading materials or anything

related to the content of the examination is not allowed!"

At the entrance, there was a proper procedure for the physical check. However, the scholars were not checked by humans. Instead, the Eye Beasts were checking them like a demonic magic mirror. All scholars were instructed to pass by them and anyone who had evil intentions would be identified easily. Those identified would suffer all types of punishments, and it would be too late to regret.

"This is just a county level examinations and yet spiritual knights are deployed here to overlook the examinations?"

Fang Yuan became a little frightened.

Chapter 168: Ghastly Head

In the middle of the examination grounds, there was a tall building.

There was a good view here; every student could be seen clearly.

An official with a spiritual bird sewn on his shirt smiled. "We have 3112 candidates today, which is a thirty percent more than the previous year, showing the education level of our county."

He was the governor of the county. The other two officials saw that the main official was in high spirits today, and were also rather happy.

However, there was a Daoist carrying a feather fan, looking at the examination grounds, unsettled.

"Daoist Fei Xiong, what's the matter?"

As the governor noticed, he began to worry. "Could it be a problem with the spiritual array on the Eye Beasts?"

The Eye Beasts were used to catch those who might cheat, but it was not without its loopholes.

"Nope!"

Daoist Fei Xiong returned to his position. In front of him, there was a small array set-up, with a few specimens of the Eye Beasts, as though they were alive as their eyes were glowing.

"The energy in the spiritual array is normal and had already picked out 32 candidates. Please be assured, there would be no chance of any of them slipping through!"

Daoist Fei Xiong promised.

"Very well!"

The governor sighed but did not detect the suspicion in Daoist Fei Xiong's eyes.

"The weird part is that the Eye Beasts' eyes flashed for a while just now, and was evident that a highly skilled person interfered with it. However, after scanning the entire examination ground, we could not find anything... Only one person is suspicious."

Daoist Fei Xiong stroked his beard, and a thought ran wild in his mind. "It seems that among these candidates, there is a mysterious one!"

With his spiritual techniques, his left eye flashed red and was no different from that of the Eye Beasts.

In front of him, a faint glow appeared and landed in front of the last registered candidate.

That candidate was pale and had weak knees. Who else could it be other than Xiao Mu?

...

In the examination grounds.

Every candidate was separated by a wooden partition and had a wooden table in front of them. It was extremely squeezey to even move about between the partitions.

Fang Yuan concentrated in his seat and snickered. "How dare you find trouble for me, I'll keep you busy!"

The spiritual array in the Eye Beasts could not detect him as they were tricked into taking him as a normal person.

Xiao Mu was not that lucky.

Although he also hid his spiritual energy, Fang Yuan's underhand means still exposed him.

As of now, he should be closely watched by the officials already.

With the fun of mischief, Fang Yuan happily opened the examination script and started to read through it.

Although this examination lasts only a day, there were many

things being tested.

The first question was about Confucian studies.

It was just filling in the blanks. However, they did not test the Confucian classics. Instead, they tested astronomy, physical geography, and human geography.

This not only tested the candidates' experience, it also tested them on their knowledge of words and their mindfulness.

After all, the answer script was not allowed to have any cancellation or removal of markings and had high expectations for every candidate.

After the simplest Confucian studies, it was on mathematics. For the Da Qian empire to recruit clerks, they had to be proficient in mathematics and be familiar with all 8 volumes of 'Mathematical Studies'.

There were requirements to calculate area, volume and composites, making Fang Yuan think about his previous life.

Fortunately, Confucian studies were the foundation of Yang Fan, and he could answer them all.

As for the mathematical problems, with his high magical energy, his mental sums skills were impressive. Furthermore, he had learnt the basics of computing sums in his previous life, and could, therefore, answer any question that came his way.

After calculation and ensuring that he made no careless mistakes, he wrote down the answer.

Calligraphy was not Fang Yuan's forte, but with his impressive control of strength, every stroke of his was not the perfect calligraphic stroke, but it was distinct enough for one to understand.

As he understood the nature of examinations, how could Fang Yuan not know the importance of it?

They did not require a perfect handwriting; just a discernable one would do.

Unknowingly, half a day passed and it was noon.

He did not need to lift his head; the rustling sound beside him told him everything.

'Most of them are in the mathematical section now, but there are some who have yet to fill in the Confucian studies?'

Fang Yuan shook his head, placed his brush down to rest and drank two mouths of water.

"The mathematical portion also tested one's endurance. Without enough endurance, how can one last so long? I'm afraid they would vomit blood from extreme fatigue!"

As he was deep in his thoughts, there was a commotion East of him. Two soldiers carried out a candidate, whose clothes were stained with blood.

Both students beside Fang Yuan witnessed it and were lost for words.

Fang Yuan, on the other hand, did not care one bit and flipped open the last examination script.

It was on policy making and was a practical topic. The question posed was in the form of a case and required the candidate to base on the classic laws to make a judgement. It was very subjective and was a trap for most candidates.

If the candidate only knew to study from the books, he would be trapped in this question.

Without hesitation, Fang Yuan took up his brush and started to write.

Regardless of how uninformed he was on policy-making, he was still once a Prefecture Master and had the experience.

However, he needed to take note of the difference and not bring

it laws which the Da Qian Empire did not have.

As he completed the examination, he still had two hours of time left.

Of course, Fang Yuan didn't wait any longer. He called for the official and handed in his script before arriving at the holding room to drink tea. After there were enough students in the holding room, the soldiers escorted the entire batch out.

"If nothing weird would happen, then I would be able to get it!"

Once he exited the examination grounds, Fang Yuan was brimming with confidence.

"And by then, I will know what this Yang Fan really wishes for..."

"Brother Yang!"

At one side, a pale candidate exclaimed with joy and arrived in front of Fang Yuan. "Who would've thought that Brother Fang had also completed the examinations! Why not go for a drink, my treat?"

"Sure!"

Seeing the skinny Xiao Mu, Fang Yuan nodded his head, and unknowingly took notice of his neck.

'Even though you might have the print of a dream master, coming up to me to seek your death? Or seek your death?'

Of course, Xiao Mu could not detect anything unusual.

Even when he was at the examination grounds and was detected by the officials, he thought that he did not cover himself up well enough. Now, he wanted Yang Fan to bear the brunt. He treated Fang Yuan like his father and pulled him to a restaurant, sat down and started to drink with him.

"Where did Brother Xiao come from? Could it be a Xiao Family in this county?"

Fang Yuan held the cup of wine, his face flushed.

"I'm not afraid to let you know, I am indeed a member of the Xiao Family, but my ancestor was a bastard, and so now we are just a normal family..."

At this point, Xiao Mu sighed and felt a little hatred in him.

"Come on, this wine is good stuff, let's have a few more cups!"

As he shared, he encouraged Fang Yuan to drink more wine. Fang Yuan drank a long and at last became drunk. He was then escorted back to his inn.

"Come... Brother Xiao, let's drink!"

Fang Yuan laid on his bed, full of alcohol. He mumbled a few sentences before going into deep sleep.

"Good chance!"

Xiao Mu's expression changed and did not appear drunk anymore.

He looked at Fang Yuan and twitched his facial muscles. Suddenly, he ripped his clothes apart, revealing a spiritual print on his neck, forming the shape of a green ghost head.

"See this? This is the person who is disturbing you!"

His words were filled with temptation, as though he was talking to a ghost. "Look for him! Don't disturb me! Go!"

Accompanying his voice, the tattoo on his neck started to glow and spin as though it had a life of its own. It was chuckling and slowed down.

"Good boy, go... look for him, don't bother me!"

Xiao Mu appeared crazy as he placed a hand on Fang Yuan. The tattoo slowly moved to his elbows, but soon remained stuck there.

"Go... go... why are you stopping? Why do you want to bother me?"

After countless attempts of encouraging it, Xiao Mu almost broke down. With a hint of sadness, he shouted. "Get lost! I have already found a scapegoat for you, so don't disturb me!"

"Jie jie!"

The laughter of the ghost was distinct in the quiet room.

Although it could not be deciphered, Xiao Mu seemed to have understood it. "You cannot do it... now? Do you need three nights of... contamination? Stay close... don't leave?"

"Pa!"

He clapped his hands. "Alright, I know what to do!"

Looking at Fang Yuan, he seemed rather unwilling but finally became cold-blooded. "Brother Yang, don't blame me! If you want to blame, blame it on the fact that we are the same type of people, and are harassed by this stupid thing!"

Xiao Mu had decided. He rushed down and was likely to be looking for the innkeeper to book a room.

On the bed, the originally drunk Fang Yuan opened his eyes. "This print... It's doesn't seem to be so simple..."

He acted weak to being Xiao Mu's guard down and reveal his true intentions.

However, his type of dream master print was very rarely seen. It was like a living thing, which confused Fang Yuan.

"From Xiao Mu's reaction, it seemed like he suffered a lot from the print, but it does not seem to be as simple as a dream master looking for a servant, could it be..."

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered.

...

After a few hours.

He faked to become sober and saw Xiao Mu as he arrived

downstairs.

"Brother Yang, you're awake! I have specially asked the kitchen to prepare soup to sober you up!"

He was full of smiles, which was infectious. "After a good chat with you, I felt schooled in your knowledge of the world. How I wish I could learn from you day and night. I have shifted here to be your neighbour, and I hope you don't mind!"

"Since this is an inn, everyone here is a guest! You're thinking too much!"

Fang Yuan smiled. "It's a good thing I have nothing on this few days and have to wait in the city for the results of the examinations to be released. I was still wondering how I would spend my days!"

"If Brother Yang doesn't mind, I'm willing to treat you to a tour around the city!"

Xiao Mu was pleased, as the fog in his eyes grew bigger...

It was midnight and everyone was tired and resting.

"Coming!"

Fang Yuan extinguished his candle and crossed his legs on the bed. He noticed faint green Bewildering Fog coming from the room next to him and snickered. "I want to see what you are!"

He concentrated and waved his hands. A white Bewildering Fog appeared, blocking the green fog. He took a little of the green fog and wrapped it around his palms, like a green snake slithering around his fingers.

Chapter 169: Ranking

"There is no doubt that this is the work of a Dream Master!"

The green fog appeared to be alive and twirled non-stop around Fang Yuan's finger. It tried to enter the space between his eyebrows.

However, the green fog would be blocked by a ray of light, which gave off an aura like the Five Fingers Mountain, every time it came close.

"That Xiao Mu should have been confused by the fog and as such, experiences nightmares every day. There could be other damages..."

Fang Yuan muttered, "What does that Dream Master want?"

He took a few steps forward and arrived beside the wall. He released his magical energy and broke through the green fog.

A hazy guestroom appeared before his eyes.

Although it was no different from this world, the room was filled with the dense green fog. On the bed, Xiao Mu's eyes were tightly shut and his eyeballs rolled about under his eyelids. He tightly gripped his blanket which was torn. He appeared to be tortured.

Around his neck, the green demonic tattoo became even more obvious and expanded to his chest. It looked as if it was about to leave his body.

"The more painful the nightmare Xiao Mu experiences, the more powerful and larger the tattoo becomes...it looks like..."

Fang Yuan moved his eyes.

At this moment, the void started to shake.

He was stunned. He looked at both his hands, "Dream-build!"

Threads of inner power appeared, they broke through the Death

Gate and arrived at the 4 Heavenly Gates.

"I have recovered my Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 9)?"

Fang Yuan was pleased, "I have found...the gateway to Yang Fan's ideas!!!"

In order to leave the dream world of others, especially that of an evil dream master, suicide was out of question. On the other hand, unless his cultivation was higher than that of the said dream master, it would be futile as well.

The only way to escape was to 'obey'!

By complying with the subconscious mind of the original host of the dream, one would be able to exit the dream world!

"My dream-building ability had returned even though it was previously sealed. Does this show that I have reached the pivotal point?"

Fang Yuan looked at Xiao Mu who was still having nightmares.

"That's right...Yang Fan eventually becomes a Dream Master! Given his status in the family, how could he have a master to guide him? Unless it is an encounter by chance!"

"Unless.....could it be that his chanced encounter is here?"

With this thought, Fang Yuan, who had originally wanted to interfere, hesitated. After thinking, Fang Yuan left.

...

"Brother Yang, how did you sleep yesterday?"

The breakfast in the guesthouse was sumptuous. There were buns, cakes, biscuits etc. Fang Yuan took a bowl of porridge and slowly ate it.

Xiao Mu had dark circles under his eyes. He sat opposite and wanted to say something but hesitated. He could no longer take it and finally asked.

"Ah? Me?"

Fang Yuan was stunned. "Not bad, a night without dreams, why?"

"Nothing!"

Xiao Mu's face was contorted. Fear, sadness, jealousy...all kinds of emotions were mixed and could be seen on his face.

Fang Yuan gazed at Xiao Mu who flushed and hid back in his room after bidding Fang Yuan goodbye.

"Interesting! Really interesting!"

Fang Yuan thought as he looked at Xiao Mu.

This Dream Master's marking did not appear to be like those common markings. Rather, it appeared to have many secrets hidden within.

It was hard to tell whether it was a blessing or a curse for an ordinary person to receive it.

...

In the examination hall.

More than a dozen rooms were open. Countless invigilators were looking at the scripts in front of them meticulously.

As the Head Invigilator, the governor did not have much tasking. All he had to do was to supervise the evaluation of the scripts and come out with the rankings afterwards.

While the first and last in ranking may appear to have done equally well in their examinations with no difference in their scores, their backgrounds mattered and could affect their scoring. This was worth fighting for.

It was just that it was not so intense.

The governor was a product of doing well for the examinations and as such, he knew full well that the thin scripts could determine

the status of the commoners and as such, dared not neglect his duty.

"Governor! The recommended script from Room B!"

An aide jogged forward and presented a script.

"Hmm?"

The governor took a look at the script and nodded his head. Without looking at the answer, the words looked nice and grand. There was just a small amount of cursive in the middle of the script that marred the neatness of the script which was a shame.

However, considering the young age of the student, it was hard to come by.

After reviewing the script, he was satisfied that there was no problem with the logic and the calculations in the script. The only issue was with the question that was subjective where the examiners would score him as they see fit. However, he would not receive a low score for it.

He could not help but remark, "Good...He would most likely be ranked first!"

He immediately ordered a person to retrieve a small knife and cut open the seal that was covering the name of the person who submitted the script. "Xiao Mu? Hmmm? He would be ranked 1st if nothing unexpected happens!"

"Xiao Mu!?"

Daoist Fei Xiong, who was originally sipping on his tea unhurriedly, asked, "Xiao Mu of the Xiao Family?"

"That's right!"

The governor nodded his head as he saw that the interest of the spiritual knight was piqued. He remembered something. "You once heavily monitored a student in the examination hall. Could it be the same person?"

"That's right...I did not notice anything strange!"

Daoist Fei Xiong shook his head slowly.

"This..."

The governor was suspicious and took the script aside.

Not discovering a problem does not mean that there was no problem. Being the top scorer would require some connections. However, his answers were too good and the governor did not want to penalize him.

"Governor, the recommended script from Room A!"

After a while, another aide came forward and held up a script.

"The examiner of Room A was Lord Peng right? He is well-known for being old-fashioned. It is no easy feat to be recommended by him. Let me see!"

The governor was very curious and opened the script.

"Hmm, the words are not bad, neat and tidy, and the style is grand. However, Xiao Mu's writing is slightly better..."

His first impression was that the script was not exceptional. He took a look at the script. There was nothing wrong with the first two pages, the reasoning was clear and easy to understand, with his very own style.

"Hmmm, not bad? This is really not bad!"

He read and read again. He could not help but praise it, "Good, an older and more experienced person might not be able to produce a better standard!"

"Oh?"

Daoist Fei Xiong was interested and came forward to take a look.

"This essay displayed maturity and the crucial thing is that the experience is rich. This is really unbelievable!"

The governor heaved a sigh and took out Xiao Mu's script.

By comparing the two scripts, the governor could see the difference in style. While Xiao Mu's words were good, it was lacking in character. It was just like a lone soldier who was great on his own. However, when met with a strict and impartial formation of troops who were common at best, the lone soldier would have to retreat.

"Which one do you think is better?"

Daoist Fei Xiong stroked his moustache. "Based on their scripts, I can tell that they are exceptional. I am interested in the two of them!"

"These talents are scouted by the imperial court, don't think about taking them in and teach them cultivation!"

The governor chided.

"How is it easy to find those talented in cultivation..."

Daoist Fei Xiong shook his head, "They had just accumulated good karma, now it's time to see their nature!"

A sign of curiosity flashed across his eyes.

He did not know who the script belonged to. However, he knew that Xiao Mu had a great aptitude.

He made up his mind to find out who the script belonged to.

"Haha...employing the young talents for the country is one of life's important task!"

The governor laughed and started to cut open the seal.

The two aides and even Daoist Fei Xiong leaned in to take a closer look.

...

Three days past in a flash.

Fang Yuan and Xiao Mu arrived at the examination hall and found a teahouse to rest in while waiting for the news.

"Brother Xiao is exceptional, you will definitely come first!"

Fang Yuan smiled and said as he saw that Xiao Mu was anxious.

Those that sat near them were also scholars and smiled with good intention when they heard him.

"I am indebted!"

Xiao Mu smiled. His smile looked worse than when he cried.

He was anxious, not because of the ranking of the examination but rather, because of Fang Yuan.

This was because, for the past few nights, he had intentionally tried to harm Fang Yuan to no avail. This caused him to feel suspicious and as such, he could not help but be unnatural around Fang Yuan.

"The results are out!"

After three blasts, the examination hall opened and a few aides came out, carrying the name list.

Numerous candidates surged forward and gathered at the wall.

"Haha...I made it!"

"It is lamentable that my hair had already turned grey when I finally had a chance to improve my social status..."

"I will come back after one year!"

Those that made it and those who did not, happiness, sadness, regrets and other types of emotions were mixed and felt by Fang Yuan.

"They are already so crazy even though this is not the true imperial examinations where those who made it will become officials. How would they react when they passed the actual imperial examinations?"

He sighed and look at the name list and saw that Xiao Mu was in second place. He immediately turned around and congratulated

Xiao Mu, "Xiao Mu, congratulations!"

"Ah?"

Xiao Mu was stumped. His eyesight was not as good as Fang Yuan and did not realise that he not only passed but got second placing when his acquaintances came forward to congratulate him. He smiled and said, "I will treat all of you to tea!"

"Brother Xiao appears to be enjoying himself?"

Fang Yuan asked, "Why aren't you the first?"

"Brother Yang must be joking. A pass is a pass, no matter how high or low the score, everybody starts at the same place. What is the difference?"

Xiao Mu forced out a laugh, "Who is the candidate that got number 1?"

"He is right in front of you!"

A candidate nearby pushed Xiao Mu's shoulders and came forward. "It is Brother Yang Fan!"

"Oh? Is that so?"

In his heart, he was unwilling. However, he forced himself to congratulate Fang Yuan. "You are much more talented than me. It is only natural that you deserved it!"

He knew that Fang Yuan was better than him. However, when he thought of the mark that followed him like a parasite but let the person in front of him go, he was no longer able to suppress his bitter resentment.

'Why? Why is the person more talented than me, yet he did not have to suffer what I suffered, why are the heavens so unjust? Why is earth so unfair? Hate! Hate! Hate!'

Xiao Mu looked dark and a green light flashed across his eyes.

Chapter 170: Green Ghost

In the middle of the night.

In the inn, there was a warm light come from a lamp in Fang Yuan's room.

"Brother Yang, you're not asleep?"

A shadow covered his light, and his voice was sinister.

"I knew you'd come!"

Fang Yuan opened the door and invited Xiao Mu in.

Xiao Mu was shocked. He saw a pot of wine on the table and two other dishes. The most crucial was the two sets of cutlery and bowls, which meant that Fang Yuan was expecting someone.

"Have a seat!"

Fang Yuan took a seat himself and poured a cup of wine for Xiao Mu.

"Alright!"

He sat down and drank the cup. A taste of spiciness filled his mouth and up to his nose, and he felt as though he was reborn, with a tinge of anger.

"Do you know that I admire you?"

After a long while, Xiao Mu opened his mouth, with a tone of disappointment.

"Oh? Why is that?"

Fang Yuan toyed around with the cup in his hands, and he didn't know whether to laugh or not.

"You are smarter than me and luckier than me!"

Xiao Mu was reduced to tears. "Why... You have everything that I admire, and yet you don't need to be disturbed by this stupid

thing!"

As he lamented, he ripped the shirt revealing his neck. A Ghost Head tattoo appeared, as though it was smiling. It had a dark green colour on half of the ghost's face.

"And because of this, you're out to kill me?"

Fang Yuan asked calmly.

"That's right, I'm here to kill you!"

Xiao Mu nodded his head.

A layer of green fog appeared and covered the entire inn.

Regardless the innkeeper, or the waiters, or the other guests, they were all in deep sleep, and their faces appeared to be in fear, as though they were suffering from a nightmare.

At this point in time, the tattoo climbed up to Xiao Mu's face, and slowly into his eyes, as though it was unnerving.

Due to the print, his voice was also affected.

"Oh..."

As Fang Yuan witnessed this, he looked at Xiao Mu with pity. "Your pain and suffering, it's all about this print? If you knew it's true value, I'm afraid you will be regretful!"

"You know its origins? Tell me!"

The other half of Xiao Mu's face appeared to be hopeful, as he stretched his hands out.

Fang Yuan's eye flashed and he struck his right index finger out.

"Kacha!"

An ear-piercing fracture was heard.

Xiao Mu shrieked and fell to the floor. The bone of his right arm was completely shattered and was bent in a heart-breaking angle.

Breaking through the 9th Gate, with the evolved Eagle Claw Iron

Skin Technique was not something a normal human being could handle, albeit not achieving its full potential.

"You are... a martial artist?"

Xiao Mu laughed cunningly. "It's useless. Although I have not learnt martial arts, I have previously sought the help of ten over martial artists, but they all died under this print!"

"Jie jie!"

Accompanying the weird laughter, the Ghost Head tattoo grew larger as though Xiao Mu had worn a mask. As it opened its ghost eyes, it stared at Fang Yuan with curiosity.

"Good boy... Kill him!"

Xiao Mu pointed at Fang Yuan, and his expression changed from one of sucking up, to one of temptation, to one of rave... he was drowned in expressions.

"What a pity!"

Fang Yuan casually commented after seeing this.

"What did you say?"

The human side of Xiao Mu's face became flushed, and his eyes were bloodshot.

"I said that I pity you! You have already detected the print's objective, and yet you don't know how to control it. You only know how to follow its instructions, feed it and become its slave!"

Fang Yuan tore Xiao Mu's phobia apart mercilessly. "Not only your magical energy but even your body has rotted away. It was a chance for you, but it became your dictator, and you deserve this!"

"Fear to such a stage where you do not think about yourself, but channel the hatred to others, enraging yourself, but you are just a little bug full of pity!"

Every word and sentence was true, and Xiao Mu could not argue.

In fact, it enraged him further. "I want you to die!!!"

Suddenly, his tone changed to one of temptation and command. "Hurry up, kill him! Kill him! Kill him! If you can do this, I will give you my entire dream world!"

"Jie jie!"

Suddenly, a blood-curdling event happened.

A distinct sound came from the face of Xiao Mu. He stood up forcefully and shot out a red beam of light from his ghost eye as he examined Fang Yuan. "You are right. This boy is a disappointment. I still thought that if he passed the training, we could even recruit him in!"

The human side of Xiao Mu became fearful. "Who are you? Why can you control my body?"

"Haha... I am Qing Gui. Did you not cry and beg me to help you?"

A mocking voice came out from Xiao Mu's mouth. If someone were to see this scene in the night, they would surely have nightmares.

"You are it, the Ghost Head tattoo!"

Xiao Mu finally understood. Unfortunately, he could only control the human side of his face. All the other parts of his body were under the green tattoo's control.

"Taking over?"

Fang Yuan became serious.

"After being infected by my Qing Gui print, you can train whatever you want with a boost in your magical energy, and you will be initiated into the Sect. I can also adopt your human form!"

The half-face of Qing Gui was full of pride.

'Evil dream master?!'

Fang Yuan came to a conclusion.

This Qing Gui dream master was fated to have met Xiao Mu as it detected that he had an above average magical energy. However, he was still far from the standard of a dream master.

Therefore, he imprinted the Qing Gui tattoo on him to test him.

If he could successfully defeat the dream demon, he could make the Qing Gui tattoo disappear. His magical energy would increase by folds and he could inherit the gift of being a dream master.

However, if he failed, he would be countered by the print. The print would then consume his Essence, Spirit and Magic to grow, and finally, take over his body!

'This most important thing is..... This was such an important test to him, and yet he did not tell his disciple anything!'

Fang Yuan mumbled to himself. 'Such lack of regard for human life, it is indeed an evil and immoral path!'

"You must be wondering why I did not mention this before?"

Qing Gui laughed. "If I told you, then what is the true meaning of training? How can you become a dream master without tribulations?"

"Dream master?!"

The human half of Xiao Mu's face was in shock.

He was regretful! Extremely regretful! He was being ostracized by his family and was not allowed to practice martial arts, which was why he shifted his focus to the Imperial Examinations.

However, there was a dream master's inheritance right in front of him, but he did not treasure it. Rather, he allowed the inheritance to take over him!

"Master! I am willing to become your disciple, and learn the ways of a dream master!"

Xiao Mu exclaimed, but it was too late.

"Heh! You are always like that, and I'm sure even if I had nurtured you, you would still be the same! Just be a good boy and let me take over you!"

Qing Gui started to snicker, and the dark green colour started to spread throughout his entire face.

As the end, it entered his eye and transformed his last eye into a Ghost eye.

"Heavenly Ghosts Transformation Technique!"

A green fog appeared, engulfing Xiao Mu.

A chilly voice was heard, as though it had come from the depths of hell.

As the green fog faded, a green long-haired sinister young man with long eyebrows stood in front of Fang Yuan.

Every part of Xiao Mu was being transformed, and he disappeared from the face of the Earth.

"Qing Gui?!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and looked at the green haired young man in front of him.

"That's right, that's me!"

Qing Gui's voice was not terrible. Rather, it was soothing and attractive.

"I see that your potential is greater than that previous garbage. How? Are you interested in becoming my disciple?"

Qing Gui looked at him in anticipation.

"Disciple?"

Fang Yuan changed his expression. "Do I need to have the ghost-like tattoo as well?"

"To be my disciple, that is a must!"

Qing Gui was filled with pride. "Do you know how scary my Sect's true ability is?! To join it is your fortune!"

"Of course, your potential is much greater than that garbage. You can straight away accept me as your master, and I shall help you get rid of your mortal ties!"

"Get rid... of my mortal ties?!"

Fang Yuan was lost for words.

If it was not him that was here, but the young Yang Fan, would he have the ability to say no?

"That's right! Since you've joined us, you cannot have any relationship with your family and friends. I will help you remove every one of them!"

Qing Gui chuckled. "Every person who becomes my disciple must pass this stage, to forget their mortal self. From then, you can focus on becoming a dream master!"

"Crazy fellow!"

Fang Yuan commented on this person in his own mind and made a decision.

Since he was not able to detect Fang Yuan's cultivation, it seemed that his cultivation was not too high.

He could understand. After all, the person here was just a print taking over a human body. Since the human body itself was a disappointment, the end product would not be satisfactory.

Just to be sure, he had to test.

"You want to get rid of my mortal ties?"

Fang Yuan showed a face of pride. "You do know that my family is the Yang Family. Can you remove all of them?"

"Yang Xinglie's Yang Family? That's rather troublesome!"

Qing Gui's eyes flashed and he snickered. "No worries. It's just

one Elemental Opening spiritual knight, two Meridian Opening Wu Zongs... When my real body arrived, it would be effortless!"

Yang Hanglie was Yang Fan's biological father and the leader of the Yang Family!

From Qing Gui's words, Fang Yuan had obtained valuable information.

Firstly, he now knew the ability of the Yang Family. It was indeed a force to be reckoned with, with 3 Elemental Opening spiritual knights, which could easily create havoc in Xia or Wu Country.

The split body of this Qing Gui was not as skilled and could not take on an opponent from the Elemental Opening Realm.

Lastly, the true body of Qing Gui would have the ability to take on an opponent from the Elemental Opening Realm, even if he was just boasting!

'Could the Yang Family be destroyed just like this?'

Fang Yuan thought to himself, and could not guess what would happen next.

'However, I came in first in the Imperial Examinations, and there seem to be no improvements in my dream building ability. It seems like this was not Yang Fan's objective, and that leaves me either revenge or finding his biological mother...'

At this point, he squinted his eyes.....

Chapter 171: The Big Battle

"None of the disciples which I have chosen has ever escaped me in history!"

Qing Gui saw that Fang Yuan hesitated a little. He gave a cold laugh and stretched his right hand out.

Xiao Mu's arms had been broken by Fang Yuan, but Qing Gui's arm was still in a good condition. As he grabbed, the green fog started to surge, taking the form of a cage. Huge pressure overflowed from all directions.

"Hmph!"

Fang Yuan's Dantian exploded as his inner force flowed around his whole body. His skin colour became metallic. Instead of retreating, he pounced on Qing Gui.

"With just your 9th Gate cultivation level, do you think you can defeat my print?"

Qing Gui gave a cold smile and waved his fingers, and green fog came together and formed a giant python. The python wrapped around Fang Yuan and trapped him.

Immediately, Qing Gui's face turned serious. An emerald green coloured scar appeared between his eyebrows. Like a small snake, it was moving around and without warning split into two.

"Woo....."

Qing Gui gave a deep sigh. Splitting the print was clearly not an easy task for him.

"Hehe.....lad, how will any normal person have such fate? Don't miss this chance!"

A small amount of spiritual light landed on his palm. Like a fog, the spiritual light remained unsettled. Qing Gui took a step forward and grew a suspicious look. "While I was in hibernation, I

felt a resistance from you against my print. Whatever mysteries you are hiding, show them all to me now!"

"Heavenly ghost print transfiguration, come and go!"

Qing Gui gave a cold smile as he trapped all of Fang Yuan's limbs. He then chanted a curse.

From his deep voice, the spiritual light from his hand fused together. A few enchantment writings appeared to form a chain. Slowly, they connected together, and after a while, a small green print was finally formed. Qing Gui stretched his arm out to place the print on Fang Yuan's forehead.

Qing Gui was already attacking without any reservations.

"You have walked into a trap!"

Just when Qing Gui was about to place the print onto Fang Yuan's forehead, Fang Yuan gave a smile and exclaimed. "Go!"

"Whoosh!"

A white-coloured Bewildering fog started to gather in the surroundings and the fog fused to form the shape of an arrow. Flying forward, it aimed straight for the spiritual print.

"Pa!"

The only use of the print was to control one's mind, and therefore had limited power itself. Coming into contact with the fog arrow, the print exploded.

'Aahh....."

Qing Gui held his forehead and cried out loud. "You....you are a dream master!!!"

His heart was filled with regret and hatred.

If the print was not hibernation and had been activated earlier, he would have realised that Fang Yuan was special!

"You're right, but sadly there is no prize for getting the correct

answer!"

In between Fang Yuan's eyebrows, his dream elemental force was surging. His limbs shook and the green fog started to fade away.

"Shadowstep!"

He tapped his foot lightly. Immediately, thousands of illusionary images of him appeared. These illusions were quick and in no time, Fang Yuan reached Qing Gui and struck his finger towards his forehead, with the intent to kill.

"You want to extinguish my divine spirit? Dream on!"

The spiritual property on his forehead was the only weakness Qing Gui had.

He didn't expect that it would be easily seen through by Fang Yuan. In shock, he quickly bit his tongue and spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Whoosh!"

The blood formed a blood arrow and it went head-on with Fang Yuan's finger. On contact, it vanished.

Fang Yuan's action was delayed for a moment as he uncontrollably hesitated.

Using this opportunity, Qing Gui tried to avoid Fang Yuan's finger. Instead, his chest was hurt by Fang Yuan.

"Po!"

There was an explosion on his chest and a bloody hole appeared. Emerald-green coloured liquid was splashing everywhere.

"Aahh....Sen Luo Hell! Ten thousand Buddhas, Kill!"

Qing Gui let out a powerful shout. A Bewildering fog surrounded him and transfigured into numerous ghostly shadows. A few evil ghosts appeared with green faces and sharp teeth hungry for flesh. However, the other half of the spirits took on the form of Buddha

and Arhat. All of them looked fierce and were staring right at Fang Yuan.

"Are they real or fake? Or both?"

The entire hotel seemed to have become a ghost city, and Fang Yuan let out a cold laughter. "What is fake will be fake! What is real will be real! Your cultivation level is not very high and yet you dare confuse me between the two? Let me....break it!"

Even though Qing Gui was at the Illusionary Divine Stage or higher, but being distracted, he could only be comparable to the Elemental Gathering Realm at most!

Along with Fang Yuan's exclamation, the whole area shook.

The white fog started to get denser. Many of the ghosts died, and the Buddhas disappeared, revealing Qing Gui in the middle.

"Do you think that my Sen Luo Hell is only an illusion?"

At that moment, with a cunning smile, he pointed his fingers.

"Kacha! Kacha!"

As illusion was destroyed, the guest room appeared larger than usual. Unknowingly, the four corners of a room had runes sparkling with spiritual light. These runes became an array and started to pressure Fang Yuan.

"You have a hidden spell in the illusion?"

Fang Yuan gave a pale face. He knew that even though Qing Gui was at the Elemental Gathering Stage, he was still highly experienced in combat. He already had a backup plan, and his attacks were continuous.

"Rise, Giant Wood Array!"

Qing Gui exclaimed, and the wooden planks from the room started to break. Vines started to spread, forming thick logs which flew towards Fang Yuan.

"Bang! Bang!"

"Bang! Bang!"

Fang Yuan quickly struck his claw out and broke many of the thick logs. With every grab, an eagle's cry accompanied it.

"It's useless. Even though my wood-type spiritual spells are weak, but when used together with my Giant Wood Array... After all, you are just a 9th Gate martial artist....."

Qing Gui mocked Fang Yuan as he saw what he was doing. However, in the next moment, he was in shock and was speechless.

"Heavenly Eagle Claw!"

Along with Fang Yuan's shout, there was a glow coming from his claws as it became deadly.

"Chirp!"

With a high-pitched chirp, a large black eagle suddenly appeared.

Its eyes scanned quickly and its feathers were as tough as a metal. Using its sharp claws to strike, many of the logs from the array were broken with ease and fell straight down.

"Release of elemental force! Giving it an eagle's form!!!"

Qing Gui was very surprised. "You are a Wu Zong!!!"

Thoughts were rushing through his mind.

At such a young age, Yang Fan was able to cultivate both martial arts and spiritual techniques, and on both ends, he was able to cultivate and obtain elemental force. Such talent was rare in Da Qian Empire and he must have inherited skills from somewhere.

Qing Gui realised that he had acted too rashly but it was too late.

"Kill!"

The giant eagle chirped and broke through the array. Fang Yuan then became a shadow and jumped to the side.

'My dream building ability has improved again!'

'Looks like a large part of the breakthrough of the dream is from the Yang family. A small part is here!'

Deep down in his heart, Fang Yuan had predicted that Yang Fan would probably have been a disciple of Qing Gui and suffered a lot under him.

At this moment, Fang Yuan counter-attacked Qing Gui. By accomplishing a small part of the breakthrough of the dream, he had gained even more control of this world and his real Wu Zong power was recovered!

"Qing Gui Claw!"

Qing Gui retreated but both of his hands became emerald green in colour. Both of his hands became ghosts claws as he struck out.

"Martial arts? No! It's a spiritual technique. He is using a spiritual technique as a form of martial arts!"

Fang Yuan let out a big laugh and said, "How can his ghostly claws compare against my legitimate martial arts technique! Watch out for my Eagle Claw!"

"Whoosh!"

Without avoiding the ghostly claw, he too struck his claw out.

The air in between them shook. The wind produced by both claws were powerful and pulsated in all directions, destroying the guest room in the process.

Amidst the explosions, Qing Gui exclaimed and blood exploded out from his body. Transforming into a green flash of light, he escaped from the window.

"Don't even think of escaping from me!"

Fang Yuan would not let him go easily and started to go after him.

"Aahh.....Who is this demon, how dare you harming others in the city with your spells? What are you taking the government as?"

Right in front, Fang Yuan heard a deafening voice.

"Hmm?"

With a few leaps, Fang Yuan arrived at a field. In front, he saw Qing Gui being stopped by a daoist, who appeared mad.

The daoist had a gentle demeanour, but became violent and powerful when he attacked.

Most importantly, surrounding the daoist were a few Eye Beasts', and their eyes were glowing red as they were able to see through Qing Gui's illusion.

"Little daoist, you are asking for trouble!"

Qing Gui was filled with hatred as he was stopped from escaping.

Even though he was an incarnation, if not for injuries he had and the rush he was in to escape, how could he be easily stopped by the daoist?

"Hey, that daoist priest over there, don't let that person escape!"

Fang Yuan seemed very relaxed and slowly walked over. "This person is frenzied. He has destroyed the whole hotel and even killed a scholar!"

"Eh? How dare you?"

Daoist Fei Xiong was furious.

A scholar who had passed the imperial examinations but hadn't taken up the role of an official was still considered a member of the government. How could there be no severe punishments for such murder?

Plus, he was escaping under Daoist Fei Xiong's nose, implicating him.

"Eye Beasts!"

Daoist Fei Xiong shouted, and the Eye Beasts lined up in a formation. Their eyes let out a red glow. "Destroy the evil! Destroy the evil!"

"Bast*rd!"

Seeing Fang Yuan coming for him and with the suppression from others, Qing Gui knew that he would not be able to escape and showed a gloomy face.

"You want to kill me? You two shall die together with me!"

Breaking his own arm and his wounds glowed an emerald green, and not one drop of blood flowed from his wounds. At this moment, he used his other arm to execute a technique. "Sen Luo Flame, burn this place into hell!"

"Rumble! Rumble!"

Emerald green flames started to engulf his body. As the red glow from the Eye Beasts landed on the flames, the flames flickered for a while before the red glow faded away.

Slowly, the fire had begun to spread and some of the flames had caught onto the Eye Beasts. Some of the statues became emerald green fire torches and were reduced to ashes.

"This is....."

Daoist Fei Xiong was surprised and retreated.

Such flame was not only evil in nature, it reminded him of someone who was extremely powerful but evil.

"Sen Luo Flame?!.....Now I remember. You are Qing Gui, the Venerable Qing Gui!"

Daoist Fei Xiong was filled with regrets.

If he knew the person was Qing Gui, he would not have driven him to his wit's end and ended up provoking him.

After all, from the energy Qing Gui was giving out, he could guess

that it was just an incarnation of him.

"You all....shall die!"

Qing Gui had become a person on fire and started to run towards Fang Yuan and Daoist Fei Xiong.

"Rise!"

Fang Yuan knew that that move was his last resort and he would not be able to last.

Even though the fire was intense, it was less intense compared to before after some of it had spread to the Eye Beasts.

Fang Yuan struck both of his hands into the ground, where all the elemental force was. The whole ground started to break and a large portion of it rose like an iron wall before Fang Yuan threw it at Qing Gui.

Chapter 172: Eagle

"Whoosh!"

The emerald fire from Qing Gui burnt everything in its way, its intensity unparalleled. The soil wall burst into flames coming in contact with the flame.

"Very well! Come again!"

Fang Yuan's breathing intensified and as he ran, he created clouds of dust behind him. He then pounced on Qing Gui.

"Rumble! Rumble!"

The fire was getting stronger, and Venerable Qing Gui began shouting fiercely. "Come out!!!"

The fiery Qing Gui started to simmer down on its own after a while, and at the heart of the flame, the flame lost its brilliance slowly.

"Let's go!"

Seeing this, Fang Yuan didn't continue to attack Qing Gui. Instead, he grabbed Daoist Fei Xiong and escaped with his Shadowstep.

"Pi la!"

In a flash.

Qing Gui, who was on fire, suddenly transformed into an arrow and flew towards where Fang Yuan and Fei Xiong were previously at, engulfing the place in a sea of fire.

"I.... will not let you two go!"

Amidst the fiery emerald flame, Qing Gui chanted the curse as his voice got softer and softer.

"He is going to die for real this time!"

Fang Yuan slowly commented as he noticed the dissipating

flames and the alarmed residents and constables nearby.

"Hmm.....Unfortunately, that was just his incarnation. We have provoked the evil Qing Gui and there would be consequences....."

Daoist Fei Xiong looked at Fang Yuan with a gloomy face. "Are you....Yang Fan, the top scorer for the imperial examinations? The members of Yang family are indeed special!"

Fang Yuan laughed in his heart.

Daoist Fei Xiong knew his background and attributed his ability to harness elemental force in both martial arts and spiritual techniques to his family. This might have been the Yang family's secret.

However, Fang Yuan would not reveal this and he gave a confused look, "You are....."

"I'm a spiritual knight that enforce the law for this county, and my Daoist name is Fei Xiong! Since you are also a spiritual knight, let's just skip the formalities between us, otherwise in a few hundred years later, there might be a confusion in our seniority for future generations?"

"Brother Fei Xiong!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head.

"That's right!"

Daoist Fei Xiong gave a happy face and he felt more connected to Fang Yuan. "Brother Yang, the martial arts you are cultivating has a lot hidden potential. It is comparable to the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique and I'm guessing that you have attained the Second Elemental Force? Otherwise, you couldn't have extinguished the flame from Qing Gui that easily....."

The First Elemental Force was the full power of a martial artist who had just make a breakthrough to obtain elemental force. By saying that Fang Yuan had the Second Elemental Force, it meant

that he was as powerful as 2 Wu Zongs or spiritual knights!

'My Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique is slightly inferior to the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique. However, with the help of my dream elemental force which is at the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm, it is no doubt comparable to 2 Wu Zongs!'

Fang Yuan thought for a while and smiled without saying anything. This demeanour increased Daoist Fei Xiong's curiosity.

'I only know two talents from the Yang family, Yang Long and Yang Ling. Both of them are disciples of a spiritual knight and they have a bright future ahead. However, both of them are still spiritual disciples.....'

Daoist Fei Xiong's eyes were glittering and he suddenly asked, "Brother Fang, do you know who is Yang Long and Yang Ling? Legend has it that these two are the youngest and the most powerful martial artists in the Yang family. However, when compared to you, there is a lot of difference....."

In between his sentences, there were many sighs.

"I shall tell you, I'm somewhat related to the two of them....."

Fang Yuan gave a vague reply and this made Daoist Fei Xiong sighed even more. "The Yang family is indeed full of talents. Yang Hanglie is indeed a lucky man....."

As he heard that, Fang Yuan was startled.

"Who are you guys?"

At that moment, many soldiers surrounded them and a few Wu Zongs were leading the group of them.

If one would say that the battle between Fang Yuan and Qing Gui had some restraints previously, the fight afterwards including the Daoist would be one without consideration. The whole street was now in a mess and the battle had affected the innocent ones. Many of them were either dead or severely injured.

"It's me!"

Daoist Fei Xiong shouted and stood out. The 3 Wu Zongs hastily greeted him immediately. "Sir Fei Xiong!"

"An incarnation of Qing Gui has caused all this mess. Brother Yang Fan was here coincidentally and assisted in stopping Qing Gui's evil doings. I can be the witness for that....."

Daoist Fei Xiong stroked his moustache and said, "Also.....the person who has scored the second highest in the imperial examinations, Xiao Mu from the Xiao family, has unfortunately died in the hands of Qing Gui. Please report this piece of news as well!"

"Yes, Sir!"

The few Wu Zongs looked at each other. They then took a bow and left.

"Thank you!"

Fang Yuan thanked Daoist Fei Xiong. He knew that this was Daoist Fei Xiong's attempt to establish a good relationship with his family.

"No problem! Brother Yang, you are so gifted, and yet chose to render your service to the government. We are lucky to have you in this county!"

Daoist Fei Xiong gave a wide smile and continued, "Even though you are the top scorer for the imperial examinations, you can only start as a service worker, but it feels like undeserving for you to take on that job. How about letting me nominate myself as a guarantor for you to become an official through the martial arts competition?"

A few pieces of information suddenly appeared in Fang Yuan's memories.

Even though Da Qian Empire was a powerful empire, the empire

still wants to maintain good relations with martial artists at the level of Elemental Gathering Realm and above.

Whoever had the backing of an Elemental Gathering Realm martial artist would immediately be able given the appointment as an 8th Grade Eagle Lieutenant!

After all, this was an extraordinary world! Even the strong and powerful Da Qian Empire would still humbly establish good relations with powerful martial artists.

"The martial arts competition....it's not happening now, is it?"

Fang Yuan's face looked a little strange as he scoffed at the idea.

This world was just a dream and it was not real. What was the use of getting such a high position?

"I might accept the offer if I was given the position to be the king of the Da Qian Empire, allowing me to read the martial arts books in the library. However, who would know if the martial arts library even exists!"

This dream world was built based on the experience of Yang Fan, who would go on to become a dream master in the future.

It was not an issue to obtain the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique from Yang Qing. After all, Yang Fan was from the Yang family and it was likely that in the future, he would be able to successfully fuse his spiritual meridians and achieve the Divine Body.

However, no one knew how much treasures were hidden in the dream world version of the Da Qian martial arts library.

'This might be because of the limited knowledge Yang Fan has...However, there is a chance that I may stumble upon the full picture of it....After all, the pathway of a dream master is magical and mysterious. It is entirely normal for anything to happen.'

"What do you think?"

Daoist Fei Xiong gave a hopeful look to Fang Yuan. He didn't know the outrageous thoughts that ran through Fang Yuan's mind.

"This is what I want, I shall not ask for more!"

Fang Yuan accepted the offer and said with a gloomy face, "After all, I have already provoked Qing Gui....."

"Hmm!"

Daoist Fei Xiong suddenly changed his facial expression and said, "You are right....Venerable Qing Gui is a descendant of a heritage of evil dream masters. His methods are brutal and it is rumoured that he has achieved an extremely high level in the Illusionary Divine Stage. Normal Elemental Opening Realm spiritual knights and Meridian Opening Realm Wu Zongs are no match for him. The Yang family cannot defend you from him, but the government can!"

He concluded with much pride, making Qing Gui sound like an ant which could be dealt with easily; which in fact is true! If the government did send its most powerful men to take him down, defeating Qing Gui was just a piece of cake.

Fei Xiong felt that the way how Yang Fan avoided the situation was well thought out.

"Great! Great! Great!"

Pulling a young talent to work for the government, Daoist Fei Xiong would be credited for it. His expression became gentle. "Since Lieutenant Yang, you have joined the government, you are one of us now. I shall bring you to see the governor later to confer to you your official seal!"

"Thank you, please guide me along!"

Fang Yuan was familiar with the formalities of the Imperial Court. By appearing humble, he became better liked by Daoist Fei Xiong.

When there were benefits, Fang Yuan was able to adapt and willing to eat humble pie, to an extent no one could expect!

Since Fang Yuan was now one of them, there was nothing else to talk about.

Immediately, Fang Yuan followed Daoist Fei Xiong to visit the governor.

The governor was a kind man. He was shocked to hear that Yang Fan was not only the top scorer for the imperial examinations, but was also a Wu Zong and a spiritual knight. The governor happily went on to process his official seal and settled the administrative issues for him.

From then onwards, Yang Fan was an 8th Grade Eagle Lieutenant. He had the protection of the government and gained much convenience when handling issues in the county.

Without any reservation, Fang Yuan took advantage of his role to gather as many martial arts related and spiritual techniques related books to read.

For this, he had agreed to all the conditions set for him, regardless of what they were, except selling himself away.

"You two don't have to send me off. I will be going back to my hometown!"

The deadline of a month was about to end and Fang Yuan bid farewell to Daoist Fei Xiong.

Above the county city wall, Daoist Fei Xiong seemed to have some thoughts as he saw Fang Yuan leaving.

"Why? Are you worried that he might betray us? Or will he repay our kindness?"

The governor appeared behind Daoist Fei Xiong and asked, not knowing if he should smile or not.

"Will he even come back?"

Daoist Fei Xiong replied without facing the governor. " He is already an official of the government and his name is registered in the system. Who can change it? Even if the previous documents about him was fake, everything else should be real now! Unless he prefers to be wanted by the government!"

"You are right!"

As the governor listened, he nodded his head in agreement.

"Plus, I have gathered some intelligence about Yang Fan and it is quite interesting to know!"

Daoist Fei Xiong suddenly gave a mysterious look.

"From the way I look, Yang Fan is not going back to share the good news and bask in the glory. He is going back to taking revenge!"

"What?"

The governor was shocked and shook his head. "Why?"

The governor felt that anyone who was talented, regardless of his family background, had to be brought up well.

"I believe it is because of his background. His mother, hehe....."

Daoist Fei Xiong stopped halfway, as though there were inappropriate parts to it.

The governor replied with a serious tone, full of anticipation. "Even if there is hatred, how is it wise to go now? No matter how weak the Yang family is, they still have a spiritual knight in the Elemental Opening Realm and two Wu Zongs in the Meridian Opening Realm. Plus, their family's Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique is quite impressive!"

"This of course....."

Daoist Fei Xiong seemed confident and gave a cunning look. "That's why I have sent a request to the Eagle Commander Headquarters to send someone to follow him secretly and lend a

helping hand if needed. This is to make sure that he is unharmed! No matter what the outcome of his revenge is, Yang Fan will have nowhere to go and can only work for the government with all his heart!"

Chapter 173: Revenge

Yang Family.

In the First Wife's room, two highly skilled martial artists were guarding the door respectfully like statues. "We have found Yang Qing's corpse. It was covered in a secluded cave in the mountains, and his limbs were torn apart. There are no clues as to how that happened..."

Lady Wang was seated and she stroked the white cat with her right hand, appearing graceful.

At this point, she squinted her eyes. "I remember... Yang Fan does not know martial arts and did not cultivate spiritual techniques. How could he kill Yang Qing?"

The two martial artists broke into cold sweat. "This..... We have no idea!"

"You have no clue about anything, and even took so long to investigate. What use do I have for you?"

Lady Wang frowned and was infuriated.

Half a month had passed, and more and more news came back. There was news of Yang Fan getting the top spot for the Imperial Examinations as well!

Of course, the news of Yang Fan being conferred as the Eagle Lieutenant was made an official secret by Taoist Fei Xiong, and therefore Lady Wang was still not aware.

Even so, she was already raging inside.

The people she sent to kill the little bastard were all killed instead, and the little bastard went on to get the top spot in the Examinations. Even though he was just a clerk and was still insignificant to the Yang Family, it was still a sore eye.

Most importantly, Lady Wang felt that she could no longer

control the household!

That was the most infuriating of all!

"It's a good thing that that bastard had gotten the top spot, but he has yet to return? Could it be that he hates me?"

She lowered her volume and mumbled to herself.

"Lady..... The little bastard should have just died. You were the one who pitied him and let him survive. However, he was not at all grateful and even killed someone. If he returns, you can use the house laws to take his life!"

One of the investigators softly replied.

He was one of Lady Wang's servants and married into the Yang Family. However, he still treated the First Wife as his Lady and addressed Yang Fan as the 'little bastard' with no regard for anything.

"You're right..."

Lady Wang massaged her forehead and closed her eyes. "Even if Yang Qing was in the wrong, Yang Fan could still change his family or request for Father or my help to uphold justice for him. What could he gain from killing him?"

Although there was no evidence, she had already named Fang Yuan as the killer.

"Da Wang, Er Wang, both of you hurry to the county city to bring Yang Fan back. Even if he had already become a clerk, it doesn't matter, just bring him back! Our Yang Family is still influential enough to do that on the court!"

Lady Wang squinted her eyes once more. "He thinks that he can disregard the Yang Family after getting the top spot, gosh!"

"Yes Lady!"

Da Wang and Er Wang bowed. They both knew that First Wife had already decided to kill him after bringing him back here!

"Wang Yiai, come out!"

At the point of time, an explosion was heard as though there was thunder rumbling beneath the ground, making everyone dazed.

All the servants were confused at what was going on, but Da Wang and Er Wang looked at each other. Both of them knew that this was the Lady's full name. Whoever dared to shout her full name was tired of living!

At this moment, they felt as though they were in a dream.

"Ping!"

"You bastard child!"

Lady Wang became cold. With the flick of her right wrist, an expensive porcelain vase shattered on the ground.

She could tell who the person was, which made her tremble, and her voice was much more sinister than before.

"Da Wang and Er Wang! Go out and bring me that bastard! Disrespectful bastard! Does he have any regard for me, the Yang Family and its ancestors?"

Lady Wang's voice was sharp and high pitched.

"This is... crazy!"

Da Wang and Er Wang were at loss. They walked out of the door and saw the person who was shouting and were shocked. "It's you! Yang Fan!"

"That's right!"

Fang Yuan was clad in white robes and appeared gentlemanly. As he walked, his loud voice filled the entire residence. "Wang Yiai, Lady Wang! You abused your authorities as a Lady to pressurise me into listening to you three times. When I was eight, you made me miss my aptitude test for martial arts and forbid me from training martial arts. When I was twelve, you allowed your children to bully me, like what Yang Hu did... I will be patient to take my

revenge. I will settle this score with you!"

"What audacity!"

This voice shocked the First Wife and attracted the attention of those in the other rooms.

"Yang Fan!!!"

Suddenly a shadow appeared and pounced towards Fang Yuan like a large worm. It was Yang Hu.

He was enraged. "Good! Good! Very good! What audacity to wrong mother. Do you want to be beaten to death by the Family? I will grant your wish!"

As her son, hearing Fang Yuan verbally abuse his mother made Yang Hu infuriated.

"What a joke...Any kindness she gives me, I will repay in folds! However, Wang Yiai tried to harm me in every way possible, so where's the kindness? I will never acknowledge her as stepmother!"

In front of the Yang Family, Fang Yuan tore their relationship apart.

He knew that once he said that, the entire Yang Family would not let him off, not just Wang Yiai.

But so what?

Breaking through this mental barrier made him feel a lot better, as though he had quenched his 3-day thirst with icy cold water. Every pore of his skin relaxed, making him feel cooling.

'Yang Fan was holding on to two things. The first was Qing Gui, and the second should be this Lady Wang! Although he held on to other things like finding his biological mother, after completing this, I should be able to escape from the dream world unscathed!'

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered. "Wang Yiai, come out and die!!!"

With this, he was just one step from death!

Fang Yuan was clear about this. However, he knew that his one-month deadline was about to be over as well. His real body in the outside world could not hold on any longer, and he just had to deal with whatever dangers associated with this!

"Rumble!

A loud sound was heard.

While the others were still in shock, Yang Hu had already struck.

He concentrated his inner strength. Although he was only at Death Gate, his inner force was very well developed and was comparable to that of a 4 Heavenly Gate martial artist!

Furthermore, there was a faint shadow of a large tiger behind him, ferociously growling as its right paw struck.

"Tiger Growling Fist!

If Yang Fan was that ordinary boy before, he would become flesh and bones under this strike, with no doubts of death!

He could tell that the enraged Yang Hu had a real motive to kill!

"Very good!"

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered as he struck his right fist out.

"Rumble!"

An intense amount of energy exploded from his body like a demonic gorilla!

In front of the demon, the majestic tiger immediately became a small pitiful kitten.

"Kacha!"

There was a loud sound in mid-air. Yang Hu flew backwards like a cannonball, and his entire arm was fractured and bleeding.

"Yang Hu, how dare you touch me! Do you know who I am? I am

from the Imperial Court! You have offended someone of higher rank, do you want to rebel?"

Fang Yuan's voice was full of energy.

This plot twist shocked the entire Yang Family.

When did this Fourth Master, who did not know martial arts and spiritual techniques and could only study, suddenly become so powerful?

Fang Yuan did not care a single bit. He took a few steps forward. "Of course, you have been unkind to me, but I cannot do that to do. I have broken your bones as a warning to you, for you to realise that there is a law for us to follow. If you owe, then you will have to pay back!"

"You... pui!"

Yang Hu still appeared strong at first, but after hearing what Fang Yuan had to say, his eyes widened and he almost spat out a mouthful of blood before fainting.

"Lady!"

Da Wang and Er Wang came forward to rescue him, but their expressions changed. "Young master's bones... are destroyed!"

"What?"

Lady Wang shrieked. "You two useless servants. What are you waiting for, hurry and capture the little bastard! A small clerk, and yet he dares to use the Imperial Court's name, is he not afraid of mockery!"

Even though it was as such, news of Yang Fan topping the cohort spread out.

The other wives were afraid of the Imperial Court, and also did not want to get involved in the First Wife's affairs and therefore did not react.

"Yes Lady!"

Da Wang looked at Er Wang. They held their hands together and combined their miniature elemental force into one elemental force. They then released it to form a physical shape, which adopted the shape of a two-headed snake, as it bit towards Fang Yuan.

"Two 12th Gate martial artists, indeed a match against Wu Zong! Such ability, but resigned as a house servant. What a pity!"

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes and a shadow of a Black Eagle appeared behind him. "Furthermore... I had already thought him a lesson. Who would've thought that you two would not learn, and even dare to attack an Imperial Court's Official in public! You to deserve to die!"

As he said the word 'die', the entire house felt hotter.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The chirping of the black eagle was accompanied by the striking of its claw, splitting the two-headed snake into two.

It continued to strike towards Da Wang and Er Wang, as the claw struck from above!

"Rumble!"

A large hole appeared on the ground, and in the middle was the remains of Da Wang and Second Wang.

"I've said it, the previous time was just a warning!"

Fang Yuan smiled.

Their deaths made the entire place silent.

After a long while, a voice of disbelief was heard. "Wu Zong?!"

An old man stood forward, his face filled with suspicion. "How old are you?"

"Potential does not depend on age. Third Elder, you are under the Third Wife, so don't get involved in the First Wife's issues!"

Fang Yuan took out a seal. "I am Eagle Lieutenant of the Da Qian Empire. These two servants tried to attack me, so they deserved it!"

"Indeed an Imperial Court Official!"

Third Elder nodded his head and confirmed Fang Yuan's identity. "Yang Fan, you are ultimately part of the Yang Family, so don't overdo things! If there are any issues, you can seek help from the court!"

He had nothing to say regarding the deaths of Da Wang and Er Wang.

After all, they were just two servants, and they indeed tried to harm an Imperial Court Official.

Furthermore, regardless of what happened, Yang Fan was still a member of the Yang Family. Kinship was still important, and he was scarily gifted!

Unknowingly, the highly skilled martial artists had a different impression of Yang Fan.

Lady Wang was in desolation after witnessing everything.

Chapter 174: Clear Moon

"This is the First Wife's matter, we should not interfere!"

"Brother Fan, we all know how you are doing recently....."

"The Patriarchal Hall? Isn't it controlled by the first wife?"

.....

The crowd was raging.

In a big household, nothing was fair and there were bound to be conflicts. These conflicts were often covered up in the name of the patriarchal and the household.

At this moment, whenever there was a conflict of interests, there would be a tendency for violence to break out.

Nobody would dare to stand out and help regardless of the time spent together and the bond they shared.

Some chose to sit and do nothing, and some even tried to push others to stand out.

As Lady Wang saw this, her face became pale white.

Underneath the name in the household and the Patriarchal Hall, she was just a lady with ill intentions.

"Wang Yiai, are you guilty of your sins?"

Grasping this perfect opportunity, Fang Yuan took a step forward.

"Rumble!"

The entire world shook and all the servants beside Lady Wang fainted. Only Lady Wang was left, giving a stern look. Ruggedly, she insisted, "Father will not forgive you!"

At that moment, if it wasn't for her pride, she would have knelt down as well.

As she said that, the whole atmosphere became very tense. Everyone from the Yang family had an image of a person in their minds.

Yang Hanglie!

This person was not only the birth father of Yang Fan, he was also the head of the Yang family. He was extremely cunning and the way he did things was unique.

Of course, the most important thing was that he was the only Elemental Opening spiritual knight in the whole family! Other than the two ancestors who were at the Meridian Opening Realm, Yang Hanglie was the sole reason for the power and existence of the Yang Family.

"Correct!"

A deep voice was heard.

The pressure Fang Yuan exerted on Lady Wang was suddenly gone.

A middle-aged man entered from the main hall.

His sideburns were white and his nose bridge was high. He appeared well-built and every move he made, made him seem like a god.

"Old Master!"

Lady Wang exclaimed in surprise. Hurriedly, she used her handkerchief to wipe off her tears of joy.

"An incarnation?!"

Fang Yuan and the other Wu Zongs were able to see through it.

"I am now at the Heavenly Wind Canyon, more than a thousand miles away from home, to look for a spiritual knight for both Yang Long and Yang Ling. I felt something amiss at home and therefore used my backup plan!"

Yang Hanglie walked in big steps and his eyes were very fierce. He took a glance around quickly and no one dared to go against him. All of them were lowering their heads, looking obedient.

"Naughty boy, kneel down!"

The presence of Fang Yuan was highlighted among the silence of everyone in the house.

Yang Hanglie's face was flushed as he shouted at Fang Yuan.

In front of his father, the head of the household, revenge, righteousness and any other thing became meaningless.

"Bast*rd!"

Seeing that Fang Yuan was unwilling to kneel down to ask for forgiveness, Yang Hanglie became even more furious. "Bast*rd! What are you waiting for?"

As he waved his hand, the energy from the 5 elements of the earth flashed and transformed into a giant wheel which fell on Fang Yuan.

Yang Hanglie was a spiritual knight specialised in the 5 elements!

He was able to make use of the 5 elements to produce something. Even though this was just an incarnation of him, he was still an Elemental Gathering Realm spiritual knight and had the Fifth Elemental Force. His power was similar to the combination of the powers from 5 spiritual knights!

"What happened?"

"Hanglie, why are you so angry? Did someone intrude our house?"

Just as the light from the 5 elements was flashing, two powerful spiritual auras were activated in the hall. One could sense that these two spiritual auras were filled with fury.

"I have caused much disturbance to you two ancestors. I will apologise personally later on!"

Yang Hanglie's body was glowing with the light from the 5 elements and he looked like a god that descended from heaven. "Yang Fan! You have sinned once more by disturbing our two ancestors. You better start kneeling down for your punishment!"

"Get out!"

Fang Yuan gave a wicked laugh. With his Shadowsteps, he charged right at Lady Wang.

"A spiritual knight?"

Yang Hanglie was a little surprised and shook his head. "That is useless!"

He waved his hand again and the light of the 5 elements dissipated, before becoming a dirty yellow colour and was as huge as a mountain. With immense force, it fell towards Fang Yuan.

"Puff! Puff!"

The illusionary image of Fang Yuan exploded, revealing the real Fang Yuan. The 5 Elements Wheel had already reached his forehead.

Seeing this, Fang Yuan bit his teeth and gave a smile, before attempting to knock the wheel with his head.

Such action was suicide and Yang Hanglie found it strange. Even though he wavered a little, the wheel was still falling down on Fang Yuan's head, which clearly showed his intent to kill Fang Yuan.

"Ugh!"

Time suddenly stopped at that moment.

Amidst a sigh, 2 spiritual knights who had been hiding in mid-air appeared. Both were dressed in black spiritual feathers robe. As they swiped their hands across, many black feathers came falling down and interfered with the light of the 5 elements.

Even though Yang Hanglie had the Fifth Elemental Force, he

hesitated when he saw the black feathers. "Eagle Leader?"

"Greetings, Master Yang. We are Black Owl and Crazy Night!"

The two leaders bowed and continued, "This person is a lieutenant from the Eagle Army, will you spare him?"

Inside Yang Hanglie's heart, he was shocked.

Yang Fan already knew that those two leaders were present long ago but didn't mention anything about it. Instead, he forced both of them to take action to defend him, as he knew that they were not willing to let Yang Fan get killed!

Many people were shocked at how scheming Fang Yuan was, and his hatred for Yang Hanglie.

"Thank you, both of you. Haha....."

At that moment, there was a change to the situation.

As the two Eagle Leaders were talking to Yang Hanglie, Fang Yuan laughed and blood started to flow out from his pores all over his body. Instantly, he became a bloodied man.

"Kill!"

He became a streak of bloody light and in a flash, he arrived next to Lady Wang. He struck his finger out towards her Mind Palace, in an attempt to kill her!

Lady Wang became pale and slowly fell to the ground. She had lost her breath and no one could save her.

The streak of bloody light wavered. Within seconds, it disappeared without leaving any traces behind.

Quick! Quick! Quick!

All these happened within seconds and some didn't have the time to react. Fang Yuan had already killed Lady Wang and escaped long ago.

"That seems like....."

Crazy Night was startled. "Is that the Blood Escaping Technique from the evil dream masters? How did Yang Fan get implicated with these people?"

Black Owl gave a serious look. "He is able to kill someone in a single strike and traverse a long distance in a short time. If he kills one person in every ten steps, the consequence would be unthinkable after travelling a thousand miles without traces! Good! That's good! Just that I'm not sure is it a good thing or a bad thing to have him in working for the government....."

Fang Yuan was not bothered by what these people had thought of him.

The moment when he killed Lady Wang, the dream world shook and an unknown change arose.

"I have gotten back all my dream building powers! I can return now!"

With that thought in his mind, a blood-red meteor zipped across the sky and disappeared.

Numerous spiritual knights and Wu Zongs in every corner of Da Qian Empire were stunned when they witnessed the meteor. Some dream masters even seemed to fear for it...

....

"Crack!"

It sounded as if a glass mirror had broken.

Fang Yuan's whole body was shaking and he woke up from the dream world.

"How....how long have I been asleep?"

He felt very weak throughout his whole body, to the extent that it was difficult for him to even lift his fingers.

What he saw in front of him was the big square. Many of the stone statues had started to disintegrate together with the square,

as though a lot of time had passed.

"Judging by my condition, I have entered the dream world for nearly a month....."

Fang Yuan trembled as he got up, giving a complicated look. "If I were to be late by a few days, I'm afraid my body would have been dead. I would either end up stuck in the dream world or become a lonely ghost....."

A dream world of an evil dream master was this dangerous.

Furthermore, Fang Yuan could mildly sense that there was a possibility of him being taken as a servant, just like what Qing Gui did to Xiao Mu.

However, he was not a normal dream master. He managed to break through and finally had the answers to the mystery behind Yang Fan's dream world.

"Roar! Roar!"

"Ssss! Ssss!"

Unknowingly, many strange beasts gathered around the square, looking at Fang Yuan with their fierce-looking eyes.

"This square contained a form of energy to chase away these ferocious beasts.....However, as I broke through the dream world, the energy is getting weaker, and the threat towards these beasts is getting weaker as well!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and felt that this small island was extremely dangerous.

If it was the descendants of Yang Fan who had come to find this treasure after gathering the 3 pieces of the treasure map, they would probably get killed by their own ancestor!

He walked and arrived in front of a stone statue.

It was a 3-eyed monkey. It had 6 arms and it looked as if it was about to pounce on something.

Fang Yuan blew lightly on it.

"Sa! Sa!"

The whole statue disintegrated into a pile of sand.

"The energy that had held on to the statue had faded, which explains why the statue disintegrated easily with just a light breath of air!"

Fang Yuan shook his head.

"Whoosh!"

With the disintegration of that one statue, a domino effect was created.

The other statues in the square also started to disintegrate one by one.

Finally, the disintegration of the stone statues affected the condition of the square as well. As the white jades lost their colour, an explosion, revealed the foundations of the ground.

After which, a distinct glow appeared from the foundations in front of Fang Yuan. The glow rose and appeared as though it was the moon.

"Roar! Roar!"

"Ssss! Ssss!"

Seeing the destruction of the square and the revelation of the treasure, the beasts which gathered around the square started to get crazy and charged towards Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan was weak and this was surely a dangerous situation for him! Only the strongest will survive!

"Haha!"

Instead, Fang Yuan laughed and was very happy. "Yang Fan, Yang Fan.....you have been extremely thoughtful but you have missed out something. Even though I have gone through your

inheritance and have no energy to fight now, I still have.....it!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle flew through the clouds and descend like a flying arrow.

"Get me that!"

Fang Yuan used up the last bit of his elemental force to obtain the clear moon before he was lifted up into the air by his Iron-tailed Black Eagle!

"Roar! Roar!"

All the beasts could only roar in desolation as they saw what had happened.

"Haha!"

It was indeed a happy occasion to reap the rewards of his goal.

Fang Yuan opened the cap of the wine pot and drank the spiritual wine to his heart's content. He then took another good look at the treasure.

Chapter 175: Poison King

‘A pearl?’

Fang Yuan looked at the enormous pearl in his hands with curiosity.

The bright rays of light faded away to reveal the pearl in Fang Yuan’s hand. It had the size of an infant’s fist.

The surface of the pearl was flawlessly smooth. It was even glowing slightly. Just by looking at it, one could straightway tell that it was not a common item.

‘This is the treasure that Yang Fan left behind?’

Fang Yuan sighed in disappointment.

He would have preferred if Yang Fan kept the true dream world for him to explore on his own.

After all, Fang Yuan reaped immense benefits from that dream world. It was as if he had gone to Da Qian Empire on his own.

‘What is so special about this pearl...’

As Fang Yuan muttered, some of his elemental force shot into the pearl as he tried to figure out the gem.

The pearl vibrated for a moment and came to a still. The elemental force that entered it was useless.

‘It seems like the equipment for dream masters can only be used by them!’

After using elemental force to test out the pearl, Fang Yuan had a rough idea about how to deal with it. Next, he used dream elemental force.

"Voom Voom!"

After Fang Yuan projected his dream elemental force into the pearl, it vibrated again. This time, the pearl shot out rays of bright

light.

Immediately, Fang Yuan felt there was some form of connection between his magical will and what seemed like another universe.

This ‘universe’ was a huge area of space way beyond one’s imagination and the door to this universe was in Fang Yuan’s hands.

"A spiritual spatial container?"

As Fang Yuan wondered under his breath, he flicked out a silver coin onto his palm. In a flash, the coin vanished.

At the same time, the glittery silver coin appeared in a corner of the spatial container. This sent Fang Yuan into deep thought.

‘There is almost an entire universe inside this pearl, this must be the Mountain River Pearl!’

He then used his magical will to search about and finally found his answer.

‘The spiritual treasure, Mountain River Pearl?’

Fang Yuan scratched his chin.

This pearl was a storage device. The space inside it was incredibly vast. It could even fit entire mountains and rivers. The only limitation it had was that it could not fit living organisms into it.

‘It almost seems like this space inside is almost like an incomplete replica of this world...’

Fang Yuan seemed to have understood a little.

In Fang Yuan’s opinion, the Mountain River Pearl was the original version of the Green Peak spiritual land, except that it was an inferior version of the current one.

However, the advantage was that he could take it with him anywhere and everywhere. It would be incredibly convenient if he could fit the pearl onto a ring and wear it.

‘What a pity...Yang Fan is such a stingy fellow to not leave anything for me inside...’

Fang Yuan shook his head and sighed.

The true dream world was evidently not in the Mountain River Pearl, but on the White Jade Square.

Sadly, Fang Yuan only had one chance.

...

After the Drunken Moon Festival, the thick fog gradually dispersed. The Wine Lake and the spiritual fish also gradually disappeared.

As the treacherous waves and currents calmed, several fishermen began to return with a plentiful haul. Smiles of joy and satisfaction were plastered over their faces.

Occasionally, there were a few martial artists who miraculously reeled in spiritual fish. These people were harassed constantly by offers almost everywhere they went. Of course, there were also many who were secretly envious and some who dueled either to get to fish or to find out the benefits one could enjoy from having it.

The entire Drunken Moon Lake bustled with activity in no time.

It was a pity that all these people who were enjoying themselves immensely had no idea that the Drunken Moon Festival that year was the last one they would be having.

Golden Dragon Sect.

There was a small lake behind the temple which had some fishes.

There was a queer development in the lake. There was the movement of a figure that took the shape of a dragon which transformed into a bright silvery light. It sprang up forcefully like a dragon.

It was the Spiritual King Fish.

As it swam, it constantly shot out jets of water, as though it was expressing its unhappiness with its tiny living quarters.

Behind it, several other spiritual fishes and even more Drunken Fishes and Silverfishes followed loyally.

‘Haiz...’

Yu Xiaohong stood by the side of the lake. She had her hair tied up into two long braids which extended beyond her waist. As her energetic eyes scanned the surface of the lake, a pained expression appeared on her face.

‘The movements of the Spiritual King Fish are really too large. Even if our sect takes every precaution possible, this news would still leak out!’

As she played with her braids, she glanced towards the great hall and sighed helplessly, "With Granddad's abilities, we might not be able to fully control even those few spiritual fishes. What more the Spiritual King Fish? If the elder had not appeared, others might have already used force to rob this place! But, that elder is now nowhere to be seen..."

Even though Yu Feishui tried his best to play up Fang Yuan's abilities, there were no limits to one's greed.

It might have been effective had Yu Feishui not overdone it. Now, the accomplishments of the Wu Zong that many people had in mind were all the lies painted by him!

Especially...after finding a strong support, he had become more complacent.

"Old Yu!!"

The atmosphere in the great hall was instantly spiritless.

Yu Feishui sat on the throne and looked at everyone else expressionlessly.

"A word of advice, you will not be able to keep the Spiritual King

Fish!"

Then, a one-eyed martial artist barked out threateningly, "We are only politely discussing this exchange with you because we see you as an established veteran sect in Zhu country. Aren't you willing to return us this favour?"

"Brother Chu, you overestimate me!"

Yu Feishui broke into a painful smile and replied, "I have no say in where the Spiritual King Fish should be!"

This one-eyed martial artist was Chu Jie. He was the leader of 18 Chain Wall, the biggest gang of bandits in Zhu country. The martial arts he had were already at the 12th Gate.

Apart from him, there was another gentler and more civilised looking man in white. He was Deadly Bookworm: a well known sinister martial artist who operated alone.

The last person was a beautiful woman who looked around 30 years of age. Her face was like a cherry blossom and she had a charming smile. Yu Feishui did not dare to underestimate her.

After all, Lady Miao Hua was a spiritual disciple! Her Intoxicating Hibiscus spiritual spell was formidable. She even successfully annihilated 3 martial artists at the 4 Heavenly Gates in a row!

These three did not have a great reputation and were obviously trying to bully him.

Apart from them, there were several other legitimate sects and even people representing government officials hiding behind the scenes. There were also many forms of threats and bribes given by them.

After all, the temptation of the Spiritual King Fish was too huge to resist.

"We have already waited for so long, why isn't that skilled person here?"

Deadly Bookworm chuckled and asked, "Could it be that you are intent on humiliating us despite our utmost sincerity?"

"Old Yu, please have a look at our terms and conditions in this exchange. They will definitely not disappoint you!"

Similarly, Lady Miao Hua forced a smile and added, "I am offering a bottle of 'Hundred Thousand Flowers Pill', Deadly Bookworm has offered the secret manual for the powerful technique 'Thousand Hearts Sword Technique' and Brother Chu is offering 500,000 taels of gold! We are asking to exchange all these items for just the Spiritual King Fish. The other spiritual fishes will still be yours! Apart from these, each of us will owe you a favour. Any time you require our help, we will definitely extend it without hesitation! What do you think?"

Her eyes glistened alluringly as she spoke. It almost had a hypnotic effect.

"You..."

Old Yu sunk into a deep contemplation.

To be honest, although the items offered were still not worth as much as the Spiritual King Fish, they were immensely valuable enough to prove their sincerity.

However, Yu Feishui had to consider whether Fang Yuan would take it out on him when he returned to find out that he sealed this deal.

"Please return!"

Yu Feishui made up his mind and hardened his stance, "Although we are a small sect, we will not be easily bullied by anyone! Not only does the Spiritual King Fish belong to someone else, I will also not make this deal with you based on your reputations! Guards!"

With his last command, there was a huge movement outside as several disciples of the Golden Dragon Sect entered the hall armed with Soft Fish Scale Armour, fishnets, iron oars and other

equipment.

Even a powerful dragon cannot defeat a snake in its natural habitat!

It did not matter how powerful the visitors were, they were greatly outnumbered. When the number of ants grew large enough, it would still be enough to kill an elephant.

"Sigh..."

When Deadly Bookworm saw this, he didn't say much and just sighed: "Since you're such a stubborn old fogey, we'll have to invite an expert to come out! Even if you don't give us any face, you'll have to consider wisely before doing the same for this elder."

"Rumble!"

The moment his last word was uttered, an overbearing aura exploded from the outside.

"Sect head, someone is barging..."

A disciple of the Golden Dragon Sect came rushing in with a shocked expression on his face. Before he could finish his sentence, his face turned beet red and he spat out blood furiously, finally falling to the ground.

"Hiss hiss!"

The ground where his blood landed gave off large plumes of white smoke.

"This is.....poison?"

Yu Feishui's expression turned sour as he thought of which famous expert had arrived.

"You guys.....Your backer is..."

With a shivering voice, he spoke, "Poison King Jie Wuming?"

"He he"

A man slowly entered the hall amidst the cold laughter.

Around him, large numbers of Golden Dragon Sect disciples fell, clutching their necks in agony.

This short and unassuming man wore a robe interspersed with blood red and emerald green colours, which made one feel dizzy and extremely uncomfortable just by looking at it.

"Yu Feishui? At least you're still somewhat knowledgeable!"

Jie Wuming's voice was like an owl's, raspy with the power to send a chill running down one's spine.

"Elder Jie!"

Chu Jie, Deadly Bookworm, Lady Miao Hua respectfully stood behind Jie Wuming.

After all, this man was a Wu Zong who was adept at using poison!

Since Zhu Country was small, this Jie Wuming was rumored to be the number 1 expert in the country due to his evil and underhanded means that others greatly feared.

"Elder Jie!"

Yu Feishui could only stand up with a disturbed expression on his face: "You're an established person, so why have you come to put me in a spot as well?"

"He he..."

Chuckling, Jie Wuming replied, "I've been researching a sort of mixed poison and I heard that the Spirit King Fish had some excellent materials for it. This made me instruct these three useless fellows to make a move..."

As he spoke about this, a chilling gaze shot out from his eyes: "However.....Could it be that I've been out of the martial arts world for too long, to the point that my name is no longer recognised and even you don't want to give me any face?"

"What kind of statement is this?"

In his heart, Yu Feishui cried, but when he thought of the divine technique that Fang Yuan displayed previously, he gritted his teeth and responded: "But this Spiritual King Fish is really the item which that elder safe kept with the Golden Dragon Sect. I can't make the decision on his behalf!"

"Hmph!"

Jie Wuming snorted, walking forward as though as his figure was swaying.

In response, Yu Feishui backed away swiftly, but a figure suddenly appeared in front of him. The arms he used to shield himself shuddered violently while he left 7 to 8 footprints in the ground.

He could smell a flowery fragrance in that instant, then a spurt of blood came bursting out of his mouth.

Chapter 176: Justice

"Grandfather!"

Yu Xiaohong heard the commotion and scrambled to the main hall, only seeing Yu Feishui's silhouette lying on the floor, spitting out blood. His eyes swelled up with tears.

"Yu Feishui... Do you think you can brush me off easily?"

Jie Wuming flicked his fingernails and chuckled.

"Since you don't want to cooperate with me, you will regret it!"

Chu Jie and Deadly Bookworm ran up, both with sinister looks in their eyes.

"Go and get the spiritual king fish and the other spiritual fishes at the back, and... since this Golden Dragon Sect is opposing me, destroy it as well!"

Jie Wuming placed his hands on his back and had the appearance of a person of high status; every word from his mouth was bone-chilling.

"Eh... Sister's youth and future, but she chose to oppose us. How unwise?"

Lady Miao Hua walked up with a red handkerchief, revealing spiritual light. "Sister can't save you too, but I can lessen your pain before you die..."

Her delicate voice confused Yu Xiaohong.

"Senior will not let you off!"

She still had a thought of clarity as she struggled to reply. She was imagining in her head the image of the large eagle.

"Keke... with Elder Jie here, why do I have to be scared?"

Lady Miao Hua smiled brighter than the sun and complimented Jie Wuming again.

"That's right! Who would be afraid of such a senior who does not dare to show up?"

Jie Wuming squinted his eyes, as though he enjoyed the compliments.

"Elder Jie is the most highly skilled in Zhu Country!"

Chu Jie and Deadly Bookworm continued to praise him after hearing Lady Miao Hua, for praise is free.

This Old Yu seemed to really have a backing. Although Wu Jieming seemed to be unafraid of his backing, the rest were not as highly skilled and had to use his name in their favour to make themselves feel better.

"Even if a Wu Zong arrives now, it would just be a minor annoyance!"

Deadly Bookworm and the rest started to boast more and more, Jie Wuming was narcissistic, which made him enjoy the moment very much.

To him, since that Wu Zong did not appear for many days, he must be too afraid to make an appearance!"

If that is so, what else do all of them have to be afraid of?

It was a pity that today was their unlucky day.

"What?"

A deep voice was heard in the main hall.

"Who's that?"

Chu Jie, Deadly Bookworm and the rest jumped up.

Jie Wuming became worried. "Voice from a hundred miles? A Wu Zong indeed!"

"Chirp! Chirp!"

As the voice ended a high pitched eagle chirp was heard.

There was a huge gust of wind and a large commotion outside. A majestic large eagle landed outside the residence, and a person calmly dismounted the eagle. He was wearing white and appeared mysterious. Who else could this be other than Fang Yuan?

"Senior!"

Yu Feishui and Yu Xiaohong exclaimed in joy.

Deadly Bookworm and company were left in fear. "Such a young Wu Zong?"

As for Chu Jie, since he was a leader of a large gang, he had the most exposure to the happenings of the world. Seeing Fang Yuan and the large eagle... He thought of something, as his heart sank. He involuntarily retreated to the sides of the hall.

"Mm, you two have worked hard, I will take over the rest from here!"

Fang Yuan gave Yu Feishui and Yu Xiaohong an apologetic smile.

Back in the secluded valley, he ate spiritual rice as staple every day. Eventually, when he became the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master, his taste increased. Never would he know that a spiritual king fish with several other spiritual fishes would create such chaos in Zhu Country, and could even attract a Wu Zong.

Of course, everything that happened was somewhat related to him.

After all, after getting Yang Fan's treasure, he became very weak and had to rest, which led to him arriving late at Yu Feishui's residence.

These people thought that since Fang Yuan did not appear, Yu Feishui was bluffing them and trying to make them believe in an imaginary backing that he had, explaining their ruthless and reckless behaviour.

"You are..."

Jie Wuming looked at Fang Yuan, appearing serious.

Compared to Lady Miao Hua and the rest, he knew that this person in front of him was not easy to deal with.

"I am Fang Yuan!"

Fang Yuan answered him truthfully.

"Fang Yuan!?"

No matter how ill-informed Jie Wuming was, he had still heard of the war in the neighbouring country. "You are the one who was under thirty years old, and yet able to cultivate martial arts and spiritual techniques together, entering the Elemental Gathering Realm, and even able to fight and win the war at Cangshui City as the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master?"

"Even though that is a little exaggerated, that's right!"

Fang Yuan smiled.

After admitting his identity, Lady Miao Hua's and Deadly Bookworm's legs went jelly.

Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master!

Spiritual knight Wu Zong!

This status was like a huge mountain to them!

Even though the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was smaller than the Zhu Country by a little, but based on his ability, if he wanted to invade them, the power-scattered Zhu Country would not be able to defend!

Furthermore, he was a spiritual knight! He was the rare talent that would only appear once in hundred years!

Just based on his solo fighting skills, all those in the Elemental Gathering Realm in Zhu Country would have to fear him.

His own ability was already so powerful, and with additional

assistance, Fang Yuan would become a person capable of taking over anything he wanted!

Facing him, even Jie Wuming had to think twice.

As for Deadly Bookworm and Lady Miao Hua? If they have yet to kneel down and beg for leniency, they would be considered mentally strong already.

"Good! Good!"

Jie Wuming was emotionless. He was ashamed, furious, afraid, unsettled and was experiencing all sorts of emotions. Finally, he forced a smile. "Since this spiritual king fish is Brother Fang's property, then we shall not have it, please accept my apology..."

Yu Xiaohong was dumbfounded.

Previously, a fierce Wu Zong came and injured her grandfather as she felt that the entire world was about to crumble.

However, now, Jie Wuming was smiling sheepishly, and Lady Miao Hua was shivering in fear... All these made her feel like her dream was fake. A fierce Wu Zong would be scared just by the name of a person? What kind of person is this senior?

"Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master... Fang Yuan?"

As for Yu Feishui, after regulating his breath, he was surprised. "Indeed... I should have thought of it!"

All the focus was on Fang Yuan, but there was only a soft laughter.

His laughter became increasingly loud, and it became hysterical.

"What are you laughing at?"

Even though Fang Yuan had not spoken a word, his attitude of not wanting to settle this peacefully was already understood by Jie Wuming.

"You forcefully enter my people's house, snatch their things, hurt

my people and now, you think a simple apology will do?"

Fang Yuan chuckled. "Could it be that my reputation does not worth anything at all in your eyes!"

Fang Yuan already wanted to avenge Old Yu, who was still spitting blood. Furthermore, base on his current high standing in the society, he could not let of Jie Wuming so easily.

Otherwise, there would be no doubt that he would use his own reputation to compare against Fang Yuan's. Fang Yuan would allow it to happen only if he was a fool.

"Not good!"

The first one to react was not Jie Wuming, but Chu Jie.

At the beginning, he had already hid at the walls of the hall. When he heard Fang Yuan saying all these, he screamed and ran for the exit.

"Bast*rd!"

Jie Wuming noticed and was furious.

This action of Chu Jie would show others that Jie Wuming was useless, that he would lose terribly in the hands of Fang Yuan. Even though that was the fact, his reputation would still be affected.

"Can you run?"

Fang Yuan's eyes were full of pity.

He was a little street smart but lacked wisdom. He knew that if he let off Jie Wuming today, the first person Jie Wuming would find trouble for is him.

Even if he was just like an ant, he did not feel happy to let him escape.

Fang Yuan bit his lips and gently blew.

"Whooooo!"

A white arrow shot out of his mouth. Everyone in the hall saw a white flash hit the running Chu Jie before his head fell to the ground.

"Pa!"

After his head landed, his body continued to run forward a few more steps before falling down and started to bleed profusely.

Mouth spitting Flying Sword! Killing one person in ten steps!

Just based on this single move, Fang Yuan could become a deity in the ancient days, gaining the respect and prayers from the masses.

"Hmph!"

Jie Wuming sighed. "I injured your person, and you killed mine. Consider it as interest paid... I'll be taking my leave!"

Deadly Bookworm and Lady Miao Hua were in utter shock.

It was obvious that Jie Wuming was afraid!

Facing off the mysterious Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master, even if only one subordinate was killed, he still left in a jiffy without caring about his other subordinates.

Without a doubt, if Fang Yuan wanted to continue setting the score, they would become the scapegoats!

"Not enough!"

Indeed, at the next moment, Fang Yuan shook his head and looked at Deadly Bookworm and Lady Miao Hua.

Jie Wuming was at loss. He did not know if it was worth it to save these two lackeys and pit himself against the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master.

Fang Yuan's next sentence shocked him.

"As compared to killing the chickens for the monkey, I would prefer to kill the monkey for the chickens!"

Without hesitation, Fang Yuan continued. "You have hurt Yu Feishui, and if I hurt you, we'll be even!"

"Little boy!"

Jie Wuming was enraged. His blood boiled and his beard was covered in blood. He looked up and shouted, "Do you really think you can take advantage of me?"

"Sssss!"

Immediately after, a large amount of elemental force was concentrated, forming a dark green python sticking out its tongue, slithering around the hall.

This gigantic python was seemingly real and had a musky fragrance, enticing people to take a few more deep breaths.

"However, Deadly Bookworm and Lady Miao Hua turned pale and retreated. They tried to focus, as though they were dodging something.

"Poison technique?"

Fang Yuan pinched his nose. "Since you know my name is Fang Yuan, then you should know that I have a nickname before I became the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master. How dare you use poison against me? Are you nuts?"

With that, a white rainbow appeared, and a few medicinal pills exploded as he rushed towards the python.

"Chila!"

The python was majestic at first, but after being struck by the palm which scattered the medicinal pills, it was as though it was being squeezed at the neck. Finally, it shrank and an opening tore through the middle of the python, as it started to disappear.

Only at this point did Jie Wuming realise that before he became a prefecture master, he was the famous miracle doctor of Xia Country!

Chapter 177: Approximation

Jie Wuming turned deathly pale after Fang Yuan dispelled his poisonous technique.

He looked at Fang Yuan, his voice hoarse, "You would not stop until you are dead?"

"Jie Wuming, remember this, you are in no position to bargain with me, much less threaten me!"

Fang Yuan's expression was cold. He arrived beside Jie Wuming, his right hand took on the shape of claws and he struck down!

"Pila!"

He used the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique to reach the level of Wu Zong which was a majestic and ferocious skill. He now possessed the Second Elemental Force and was on par with a Wu Zong who had trained with the Yang Family's Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique. He now had enormous strength and as such, the technique was hard to block.

Jie Wuming's skills were originally lower than his and depended completely on his poison technique.

However, his poison technique was dispelled and he was in dire condition.

"You..."

He barely finished saying a word before a gust from the claw struck him which severed his right arm.

Jie Wuming was shocked as he met Fang Yuan's cold gaze.

"I am only using my prowess as a Wu Zong. If you are not even able to counter this, you might as well die here!"

Fang Yuan's hands moved like the wind and created many illusions of his claws.

"This..."

Yu Xiaohong and Yu Feishui looked on in a daze.

A Wu Zong! Zhu Country's top fighter! A renowned king of poison! He was being pressured to such an extent?

Duo Mingshu and Lady Miao Hua trembled in their shoes but dared not leave, their hearts beating wildly.

"Xiuxiu!"

The gale was fierce.

Fang Yuan became happier as he fought.

With the experience from his dream, his Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique had reached the level of a master!

On this mainland, where martial arts were beginning to become extinct, there was nothing after the Elemental Gathering Realm! However, Yang Fan was from the Da Qian Empire where martial arts was commonplace, he knew that there was still the Elemental Opening Realm after the Elemental Gathering Realm!

Gathering the spiritual meridian, with every one increasing the elemental force, would allow one to obtain the Divine Body in martial arts!

"I have deduced the method of opening the meridian using the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique. As the Eagle Lieutenant, he had gathered experience by reading extensively the collection in the county and strengthened his foundation. The next step would be to open the spiritual meridian while using my Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique and enter the Meridian Opening Realm!"

In Fang Yuan's eyes, Jie Wuming had become a good target.

"Xiuxiu!"

The sound became more intense.

The countless illusions transformed as the wild wind howled and

whipped around. Suddenly, the illusions disappeared and revealed the figure of Jie Wuming.

The old man was drenched in sweat. His face turned pale and he collapsed!

If Fang Yuan did not hold back, he might die of exhaustion!

"Bring him away!"

Fang Yuan stood straight and looked at Jie Wuming.

In his mind, Jie Wuming was an excellent subject for his experiment.

From the previous fight, he had a rough sensing of the next stage of the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique. If he was able to use Wu Zong as the base to continue his experimentation, he would be able to deduce the method to open his spiritual meridian.

'Such a shame...these techniques originated from the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique. If my experiment is successful, I would be able to change the name of the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique...'

Truth be told, that was nothing much.

After all, the Eagle Claw Technique was the most basic of the skills with many variations such as the Giant Strength Eagle Claw Technique and the Poison Claw. The skill is compatible with other moves. As such even if there was a Giant Spiritual Eagle Claw, it would not be a problem.

'Of course...I must be cautious in this step! I would need to figure it out in my dreams and then practice it in real life...as this is from the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique, its impact would be great. I am just afraid that I would be unable to break through the limit and fail to complete the technique!'

Fang Yuan's eyes were serene. He knew that he had yet another reason to visit the Da Qian Empire.

"Un...understood!"

Yu Xiaohong was in a daze and unconsciously agreed to it. Soon after, she came around, her face flushed like an apple, and vigorously shook her head.

"Since this is the request of Prefecture Master Fang, I would accomplish it at all cost. It is just that if we want to wait until Jie Wuming wakes up...cough cough..."

Yu Feishui clambered up and struggled to speak.

"Rest assured, I will not leave during this time!"

Fang Yuan stood up straight and smiled. "The scenery here is enchanting. I want to stay here for a while and am not sure if the both of you will agree to it?"

"Of course! Definitely!"

Yu Feishui and Yu Xiaohong nodded their head as if they were chicks feeding on grains.

"Oh, and the two of you..."

Fang Yuan turned around and looked at Duo Mingshu and Lady Miao Hua.

"The two of you...if you require any compensation, discuss it with Yu Feishui!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand.

"Thank you, sir, for your generosity!"

The two of them expressed their gratitude and repeatedly kowtowed as if they had been given a pardon.

...

With a Wu Zong in town, the threat from the Golden Dragon Sect became a joke.

When Fang Yuan's identity was leaked out, those that were looking at him with ill intentions retreated and some even came

forward with gifts as apologies.

Half a month later.

Golden Dragon Sect Mountain.

"Jiujiu!"

The eagle's cry rang out and pierced the clouds, the sound travelled for miles.

The Iron-tailed Black Eagle was trimming its feathers as it looked gravely at the figures in the fog.

"The gathering of the elemental force is for the opening of the meridian! The Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique was a top-notch technique to open the spiritual meridians. It is able to open 8 spiritual meridians, gaining elemental power level 8, and eventually achieving the Divine Body. By then, the martial artist would be very formidable and difficult to defend against!"

Fang Yuan walked on and every now and then, waved a claw. The action caused the clouds and fog to split and the elemental force caused waves to be formed in the lake as it was channelled outwards.

The spiritual king fish knew what was happening and hid at the bottom of the lake without coming out.

"The technique to open the meridian for my Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique should not be second to this...of course, the most crucial would still be the Meridian Opening. Even if only one spiritual meridian is gathered, I would still be able to enter the Meridian Opening Realm!"

Although Fang Yuan was simultaneously cultivating his martial arts and magical energy, he was still at the Elemental Gathering Realm.

Even though Fang Yuan had reached the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm on his path as a Dream Master, he was not

confident to break through the Holy Illusionary as it was too difficult.

It did not matter as it would be sufficient to suppress this mainland if he managed to enter the Meridian Opening Realm in the path of martial arts.

"Benefactor, please have the soup!"

A bubbly figure carried a food container forward. It was Yu Xiaohong.

As he opened the container, the rich smell of the fish soup reached his nose. It had spiritual properties.

This is a spiritual fish soup and was made with the Drunken Moon Lake spiritual fish as the main ingredient. It tasted fresh and replenished the spiritual energy.

"Thank you!"

Fang Yuan reached for the soup and gulped it down.

Yu Xiaohong placed both her hands under her chin and watched on silently. It was as if small stars appeared in her eyes.

'Thanks to Jie Wuming's selfless contribution, I have nearly figured out the method to gather the first spiritual meridian with the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique...'

After drinking the spiritual soup, Fang Yuan waved Yu Xiaohong away without caring about her feelings and looked at his own stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 11.5

Spirit: 11.5

Magic: 9.9

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Dream Master (Peak of Elemental Gathering

Realm)], Wu Zong

Technique: [Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique (Grade 13) (11%)], Ecstasy Spell, Shadowstep

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"There are increases in 3 of my stats, of course, the most important would be the proficiency points, and it can finally be increased!"

Fang Yuan almost teared.

After he reached Wu Zong, the proficiency point of the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique had stagnant as he had no way to further improve.

Now, with a direction for him to improve, the proficiency points for the Grade 13 Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique had finally been released.

As long as he continuously practicing, he would be able to reach the proficiency point of 99%. After that, all he needed would be an opportunity to break through the Meridian Opening Realm.

"With the nourishment from the spiritual things, there would definitely be no bottleneck once I reach the peak of the 13th grade. When that time comes, my cultivation as a Dream Master and a Wu Zong would be at the peak of the Elemental Gathering Realm. There would be no one here that would be a match for me unless I was ganged upon!"

After all, Elemental Gathering and Elemental Breaking were two notions.

It would be difficult to take on many opponents at once. Faced with the threat of Wu Country, Fang Yuan could only be patient.

"It won't be long..."

He looked gravely in the direction of Wu Country.

...

Capital, Xia Country

"I would like the princess to reconsider, my country might be forgiving but we definitely would not tolerate it if we keep getting bullied! My 200,000 strong army would not accept it as well!"

The young prince who previously appeared in the Secluded Mountains Prefecture City threatened.

"200,000?"

Xie Lingyun laughed and brushed aside her hair, "Why did I receive news that you all met with trouble in Cangshan and were defeated in the plains previously? A few thousands of them were lost in the battle, 200,000 strong army? Is there even 10,000 soldiers left?"

"How dare you!"

The prince was enraged. He looked at Taoist Mu Li who stood behind Xie Lingyun. His mouth moved but did not say anything. He turned around and stomped off.

When he reached the guesthouse, he flew into a rage and smashed a cup.

"She dares to humiliate me?"

His eyes were bloodshot and he breathed heavily.

"Your Highness, you are too superficial. Every time a big event had a peaceful air..."

The middle-aged scribe shook his head.

"Wu Country is still strong, Yuan Country was just a small obstacle, the more important one is still Cangshan City..."

The prince raged once more, "That Fang Yuan!"

Looking at the prince's enraged expression, the middle-aged scribe hesitated before saying, "There is news about the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master."

"Speak!"

"He was at the Drunken Moon Lake in Zhu Country and took part in the Drunken Moon Festival. I heard that he caught a spiritual king fish and even clashed with the Zhu Country's King of Poison, Jie Wuming. Jie Wuming was defeated!"

The middle-aged scribe fanned himself.

"Jie Wuming..."

The prince's eyes shifted, "If it was you, how would you compare?"

The middle-aged scribe was shocked and replied, "It would be easy to chase him away, and killing him would be hard! Capturing him would be even harder!"

"But the Prefecture Master did it! The rate at which his powers are increasing is a cause for worry..."

The prince's eyes shifted and he suddenly smiled coldly, "He is going to bring about his own destruction!"

At that moment, Xie Lingyun received a report from Fang Yuan and was at a loss for words.

Chapter 178: The Conference

At the Green Peak spiritual land.

The fog scudded and separated, revealing a giant eagle.

"Chirp!"

At the cliff, a silhouette of the Red-eyed White King Bird appeared. Behind it, there were numerous small white birds following behind. As they saw someone approaching, they all became excited.

"Whoosh!"

A streak of white light flashed past; it was the Flower Fox Ferret.

"I'm back!"

Fang Yuan, who was riding on the eagle's back, was emotional as he saw his spiritual beasts.

His Iron-tailed Black Eagle was not only transporting him, it was carrying a huge metallic box with its claw and in the box was the spiritual king fish.

As for the other types of fishes like the spiritual fish and Drunken Fish, they were not as lucky as all of them had either been mashed up or dried up and stored in the Mountain River Pearl.

The treasure left behind by Yang Fan may seem useless on the outside, but when it came to storing things, it had brought much convenience to Fang Yuan and it would make things easy for him if he had to travel in the future.

"No place can compare to my own comfortable home!"

Fang Yuan ordered his Iron-tailed Black Eagle to land and exclaimed as he went to look for the Red-eyed White King Bird and the Flower Fox Ferret.

Of course, if the location of his secret house was made known to

others, the royal family of the Xia and Wu Countries would be eyeing for it as well.

To him, his appointment as the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master was incidental. How could that be more important than the spiritual land at the Green Peak?

"Clang! Clang!"

There were loud clanging noises coming from the metallic box continuously.

"You still have so much energy even though you have been locked up inside for such a long period!"

Fang Yuan touched his chin and said, "Alright.....there is a small pond below this cliff. It shall be yours once it has been expanded!"

Since he was already into farming, how could he not be having fishes as well?

The pond below the cliff was a suitable location to rear the fish there.

No matter how strong the spiritual king fish was, without the freedom it used to have in the big river and ocean, it would slowly become less fierce.

"I guess I am considered rich now....."

After he returned to the spiritual land, Fang Yuan started to stocktake the assets he had.

The spiritual medicine garden was the most important, but the Flame Jade Rice was not to be neglected as well.

The Green Peak spiritual land now had the protection of the Bewildering Fog, Sickle Grass and Serrated Flower surrounding the Green Peak. Internally, the farm was patrolled by the Flower Fox Ferret and the Red-eyed White King Bird, making it extremely peaceful. The crops in the farm and the plants in the spiritual medicine garden were thriving. Fang Yuan was able to harvest a

season's worth of tea leaves, and even the seed of the Vermillion Fruit was growing pretty fast and had grown into a strong and small tree.

"I had revealed my abilities a little while I was in Zhu Country and it had likely gathered some attention. I had better remove the suspicion on me!"

After he returned to the straw cottage, Fang Yuan sat down with his knees crossed and let out a long sigh.

The mistakes and experience of the previous Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master Liu Yan was a timely reminder for Fang Yuan.

Liu Yan was only having a slight possibility of breaking through the bottleneck of the Elemental Opening Realm and had already encountered so many problems. What would the even more talented Fang Yuan face?

As a precautionary measure, he would have to remain mysterious and not appear too many times in front of others as they might target him.

"Hit and run, hmm... When did I become a guerrilla fighter?"

As Fang Yuan thought about this, he chuckled and gave a cold look. "IT seems.....I have to destroy their hopes!"

To do that, he could either stay where he was or he could progress and breakthrough to the Elemental Opening Realm!

"In this pathway of a dream master, I have reached the peak level of the Elemental Gathering Realm. This breakthrough will be very difficult. My mind can affect the physical matter, to actualise an object from the dream world..... How is it an easy task?"

"For this, I can only wait for an opportunity. Next up is to focus on the pathway in martial arts!"

"Since I have attracted much attention from the Zhu Country, I should stay in the Green Peak for a period of time to self-

cultivate....."

Fang Yuan looked at his stats window and seemed to have a thought.

Thanks to the unlucky King of Poison, Jie Wuming, Fang Yuan had come up with not just the idea of his new technique and had progress in coming up with the general movement of the technique.

...

Half a month had passed.

Fang Yuan was full from his meal and he took a sip of the spiritual tea. He then came to the courtyard.

Breathe in.....and out...

With just the simple act of breathing, there was a stream of air flowing around the courtyard. The spiritual energy had gathered to form a whirlpool. All of these made it seem like there was a huge beast inside his body.

"The Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique from the Yang family is built upon one's foundations! The breathing technique focuses on strengthening the digestive system, and can be further improved with an intake of large amounts of spiritual objects.....I have plenty of spiritual rice, spiritual tea, spiritual flowers and spiritual fruits!"

Those who learnt this technique from the Yang family might not be able to enjoy the luxury of these resources, and therefore, Fang Yuan can accelerate his progress on the cultivation of this martial art technique much more than usual.

"With strong foundations comes a strong elemental force, which will be above that of the average human. At the stage of Wu Zong, one would have giant spiritual strength....My Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique is based on the rough breathing technique and it helps to strengthen my Eagle Claw. Therefore, this compensates for the

lack of internal cultivation in this technique!"

Originally, there had always been a limit for the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique and the highest one could achieve was the peak of the 12th Gate.

Fang Yuan was then able to break through the limit of the peak in the dream world, of which no one in the past had been able to do so. The limit was pushed to the 13th Gate for him to be able to attain Wu Zong. Hence, his version had already varied quite a bit from the original one.

After encapsulating the essence of the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique into it, the difference became appalling.

"With the experiments, I have made in the dream world and the complement of being a Wu Zong in the real world, opening the first spiritual meridian and the concentration of the spiritual meridian to breakthrough to Grade 14 shouldn't be a big problem. This sublime version of the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique will no longer be the original one. I shall name this new technique the Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique!"

With this thought in his mind, the letters of the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique in his stats window started to become blurred and the entire name changed.

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 12

Spirit: 12

Magic: 9.9

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Dream Master (Peak of Elemental Gathering Realm)], Wu Zong

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 1) (99%)], Bewildering Spell, Shadowstep

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique - It is a unique technique which is formed from the combination of the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique and the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique. This technique is initiated from elemental force and strengthened with giant spiritual strength. Defence is strengthened. Poison capabilities are strengthened. Energy is strengthened. Yin properties are strengthened. Current progress is 99% for the first spiritual meridian!"

All these were written based on the proficiency points but there was a bottleneck for the last step.

"If I am able to concentrate the first spiritual meridian successfully, I will be a Meridian Opening Realm martial artist and I will be powerful enough to suppress anyone in this land....."

Fang Yuan's muscles tensed up like a giant spiritual god's. His skin was as tough as iron but on the surface, it looked like any other person's skin. These were the changes after he had encapsulated the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique into the Eagle Claw Iron Skin Technique.

"Now my breathing is deep and my strength is superb! This is indeed one of the top techniques in the Da Qian Empire!"

Fang Yuan slowly explored the features of this new technique. Suddenly, a streak of spiritual light appeared on his body, like a small snake. The streak of light was moving about and it looked illusionary.

This was the first spiritual meridian he had concentrated. However, since it was not yet stabilized, therefore, it appeared illusionary.

"I have already reached the bottleneck for martial arts as a dream master. After this, I can no longer improve by cultivation and hard work alone....."

Fang Yuan murmured to himself and called out for the Red-eyed White King Bird. "It's time to go and manage the matters in the Secluded Mountain Prefecture and look for opportunities to improve!"

.....

In the Secluded Mountain Prefecture City.

Inside the Prefecture Master's mansion, people were squeezing about.

Zhou Wenwu, Yu Xinlou and the others now had stable spiritual auras. They had matured quite a bit and were handling the matters of the Secluded Mountain Prefecture together with Zhang Qingfeng.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Suddenly, a series of chirps was heard and their faces were filled with joy. "This chirp.....The Prefecture Master is back!"

They immediately went out to the courtyard and indeed, a strong gust of wind accompanied the descent of Fang Yuan and the Red-eyed White King Bird.

"Greetings, Prefecture Master!"

All of them cleared any thoughts that they had in their minds as they greeted Fang Yuan.

"There is no need for the formality. Gather everyone for a meeting in the main hall!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand.

"Yes, Master!"

No one dared to disobey his order. After a while, the main hall was filled and Fang Yuan went to his seat.

Niu Dingtian, Zhang Qingfeng and a few newly appointed capital officials, Zhou Wenwu, Yu Xinlou, Huang Fu Renhe

and.....familiar and new faces were all present here. Oh, and the two disciples, Chen Ziying and Lanruo, together with a middle-aged man who had a long moustache. This man was the father of Chen Ziying, Chen Qing. Together, they bowed and greeted Fang Yuan, "Long live the Prefecture Master!"

"Please rise!"

Fang Yuan lifted his right hand and everyone rose against their own will. Even Niu Dingtian rose as well and felt a little frightened.

'The person with the greatest power!'

With such ability, even if he distributed his power among his men, it was only a matter of an order before effortlessly consolidating his power back again.

Of course, Fang Yuan would not trouble himself and was just trying to demonstrate his capabilities.

"I have been focusing on my cultivation. Did anything big happen here?"

He skipped the introductory speech and went straight to the point.

"After some reorganisation, we now have 30,000 soldiers and there are no enemies. It has been quite peaceful!"

Niu Dingtian was the first to report.

"Regarding the people, prices of commodities are stable. The sufferings caused by the previous war is slowly disappearing. Even though the citizens did not mention that they are living a good life, they are still able to survive. My next step will be to gather all the refugees to move to the barren land!"

Zhou Wenwu reported calmly in a clear and logical way.

However, Yu Xinlou hesitated a little in his report. "There is another matter. Princess Xie Lingyun from the Xia royal family has

brought the letter of credence, and had requested to see you! Since you were not here, I have arranged for her to stay in the guest hall."

"Xie Lingyun?!"

Fang Yuan frowned.

He felt that she was only here because of something.

"Why is she here?"

"She has written the purpose of her visit on the letter of credence. It's about the Yuan Wu Conference!"

Zhou Wenwu replied.

"The Yuan Wu Conference?"

Fang Yuan was a little shocked. He felt a sense of familiarity with that term and recalled that he had seen it in a book before.

With the explanation of that term from one of his subordinates, he then fully understood it.

This conference was similar to a conference between countries.

Logically speaking, disbanding of old countries and forming of new countries would only be formally recognised by every other country if the issue was highlighted and approval obtained during the conference.

Previously, Yuan Country's influence was at its peak. However, among all the other countries, Wu Country was the strongest. Hence, this conference was formed as these two countries had taken turns to host it, and it had since become a tradition. This was why it was called the Yuan Wu Conference.

"This conference is, in fact, a platform for every country to display their armed forces!"

Zhou Wenwu looked a little worried as he mentioned that. "If we are unqualified to enter the conference, we will not be able to

avoid war, and this has been proven many times in history!"

'Isn't this a platform for nomads and farmers to display their strengths?'

Fang Yuan's eyes glittered and came to a conclusion.

Chapter 179: Yuan Country

"The Secluded Mountain and Xia Country are of the same ancestry and cannot do without each other. For this Yuan Wu Conference, we must stand together to prevent anyone who might try to act against us!"

Xie Lingyun's voice was soothing and gentle, and in front of Fang Yuan, she expressed her intentions with grief. "This time... If you, as the prefecture master would like to start a country on your own, the Xia Country would give our fullest support!"

"Has the situation reached such a stage?"

Fang Yuan was troubled.

To start a country... Who would have thought that a small issue at the beginning would escalate to such a stage?

And at the next moment, he saw through the weakness of the Xia royal family.

Even with the protection of Daoist Mu Li and another Wu Zong, the Xia Country was still extremely weak.

After all, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was forcefully separated from the Xia Country, and the Summer Sun Prefecture was left war-torn. It was a matter of months before the country could recover fully from all these setbacks.

"Other than official affairs, I have a personal issue..."

Xie Lingyun looked at Fang Yuan's disciples and asked him, "I've heard that you have taken in two disciples? Are you interested in taking in another one?"

"Oh?"

Fang Yuan laughed. "Is this the royal family's decision?"

Never would he have thought that in this situation, the Xia Country would still be willing to trust him.

After all, his progress would be a hindrance to Yuan, Wu and the other countries.

"I have thought through it carefully. In this tumultuous times, if the Xia Country wants to progress, the only way is to take this gamble!"

Xie Lingyun bowed respectfully. "Lingyun is useless. May I invite Prefecture Master Fang to take up the appointment as the Xia Country Advisor! Please accept the future fate of this country as payment. From now on, we will stick together till death! As a gift, we will accede to anything that you might request from the Xia Country's treasury and the royal family's private collection!"

'Is this them showing their utmost sincerity to me?'

Fang Yuan's heart wavered. "Finally, the princess's true colours!"

After pondering for a while, he continued. "I'll agree to take in another disciple. Where is he?"

"Right here!"

Xie Lingyun smiled cheekily. "What do you think of me, prefecture master? Do I have the potential?"

...

The leaves were rustling in the breeze.

On the plains, a group of cavalry were cheering as they chased after a prey.

Among the group, the leader was a 20-year-old young man, who was wearing a golden crown but had a brute appearance. Two bodyguards on their horses accompanied him by his side, and they appeared majestic.

At this moment, they had spotted a yellow goat. Stretching his bow, the young man then released an arrow.

"Whoosh!"

The arrow was like a meteor, gliding through mid-air. It went straight into its left eye and came out from its right eye, without touching any of its furs.

"Wonderful! Eighth Prince, your archery skill is amazing!"

The surrounding troops cheered heartily. Seeing the opportunity, they react quickly and carried the prey before showing it off to everyone in the vicinity.

"During the autumn season, before these animals enter their hibernation, they will stuff themselves with food. This is the best opportunity to hunt!"

The Eighth Prince smiled and tossed his bow on the ground. "What's so great about a yellow goat? Why not catch a wolf or leopard, that'll be more interesting..."

This Eighth Prince was the youngest son of the Yuan King. Since the independence of Yuan country, there was a law that the youngest son would take over his position.

This was because in the past, out in the plains, the mortality rate was high. After the father and a few older brothers had died in the war, the youngest child who would've just matured would take over the household, and this was a common practice.

Although the current king had been in his position for many years, he was still very used to having a lot of power. Thus, many would view the Eight Prince as the heir to the throne, which gained him a lot of admiration.

"The fun has ended for today..."

After galloping for a while, the Eighth Prince pulled the halter and gazed towards the South. "Who would know when would horses be able to gallop up the Southern Mountain! By then, we will be able to hunt anywhere we want! This is what men should be doing!"

Everyone's eyes glittered.

In the history of the Yuan Wu Conference, countries would have slight conflicts with one another, especially between the Yuan and Wu Countries.

Before this year's conference, the Wu Country had a small setback, which made the Yuan Country have thoughts on how to take advantage of them.

"What a pity... The previous time Wu Country was defeated, it was Second Brother who was leading the troops..."

The Eighth Prince shook his head and sighed. "Father was happy and rewarded Second Brother with many gifts. He even added more troops and calvaries to his original battalion....."

This was one of his reasons for planning to attack the South.

The Eighth Prince knew that even though the traditional law gave him the advantage of being the rightful heir to become king, it still could not guarantee him the throne.

Needless to say, his father, the king, was at his prime age. The Eighth Prince's few younger brothers were growing up incredibly quick and were about to reach the age of maturity. By then, his position would become very awkward.

In order to protect and assure himself to become the king, the Eighth Prince had to have some form of accomplishments to back himself up, in order for the entire Yuan Country to be willing to accept him as king.

What else can compare to taking over the entire Southern Mountain?

"The upcoming Yuan Wu Conference would be my chance! Among the southern people, the Wu Country is the strongest. Judging from the size of their military, they can no longer compare to us. Next up would be to see whose side is stronger!"

The Eighth Prince waved his hand and ordered for a person whom he could trust. "In the upcoming Yuan Wu Conference, all

the country's kings, newly promoted spiritual knights and Wu Zongs would all come together. In this period of time, were there any noticeable ones?"

This person was dressed in black robes. He had a spiritual drum tied around his waist. His appearance was blood-red and felt like he had a bloodied vibe. The handle of the drum appeared pale, as though it was made from a real bone.

He was a spiritual knight from the plains, but the Yuan country preferred to call him a shaman.

"The countries in the south are all in chaos. Recently in the past six months, there was an uprising in a strong country, the Xia Country! They went through a separation, and an entire prefecture was separated out from the country!"

This shaman's voice was high pitched, as though a piece of metal was scratching against another. "The new Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master is called Fang Yuan. He is highly skilled in a shaman's spell techniques, and is a strong warrior!"

"Rumour has it... His spiritual techniques allow him to control spiritual plants, which gives him the ability to transform an entire city into a demonic plant hell. With this, his plants swallowed tens of thousands of the Wu Country's soldiers!"

"Furthermore, he is extremely skilled in martial arts, and is on par with the strongest warrior we have in Yuan Country!"

...

It was obvious that this shaman had his spies in the south. Even though he was always in the plains, he could still continuously report his findings of Fang Yuan.

"Fang Yuan?"

The Eighth Prince froze, before continuing. "Who would have thought that there would be such an outstanding person from the people of the South. He is our greatest enemy! We must observe

him at the upcoming conference."

"Not just that... I've heard from the Wu Country that they want to get rid of this person as well. We might be able to work with them! If there's a need, their country advisors Wu Wudao and General Fei Long might be able to help us secretly!"

If Fang Yuan had heard this conversation, he would have been speechless.

Wu Country and Yuan Country were bitter enemies and had once fought aggressively on the plains.

However, they might form an alliance just to deal with him.

"Haha... Let's work with them! Why not?"

Eighth Prince laughed. "This is how the people from the South are! Even at their demise, they are still against each other, killing amongst themselves! Wasn't Xie Daoling like that too?"

"That's true!"

The shaman, who was at one side, was nodding his head. "The people from the South like to fight among their own people. If they could come together and unite, only then would we feel threatened and need to hide in the depths of the plains. But now, this is our best chance! This time, the king has the intention to allow Eighth Prince to represent Yuan Country, and this is the best opportunity for us to observe the other countries!"

"That's right! That's right!"

Eighth Prince nodded his head.

"Report!"

At this moment, a black dot appeared on the horizon. It was speeding towards them on horses.

"Your Highness!"

A huge number of calvaries and troops rushed and approached,

before stopping in front of him. The chaotic scene turned into silence.

A soldier leapt down from his horse and bowed. "The First Prince has attacked the Sunset Division and returned victorious!"

"Big brother is back!"

Eighth Prince sighed as he felt a little depressed.

They had already sorted out the issue of who should be the rightful heir. However, the return of the First Prince meant that he also knew the importance of the Yuan Wu Conference!

"Could he be thinking of replacing my rights of representing our country?"

Eighth Prince squinted his eyes and glared.

"Also... the First Prince had presented a female saint to the king, the pearl of the plains - Purple Dream Princess! I've heard that when she arrived, the entire palace was smitten. The king was elated and rewarded him handsomely..."

"This big brother of mine..."

The Eighth Prince was speechless. He had yet another worry in his mind.

In fighting to become the crown prince, he could not take a step back. After all, there were too many people who placed their hopes and their reputation on him.

...

Wu Country.

"Soldiers, let's move out!"

As the command was given, ten thousand soldiers formed a rectangular formation, and it was impressive.

Even though the Wu Country had suffered a defeat before, their confidence and strength were still there. These ten thousand

soldiers were the best of the best, the elites. Every single one of them was at least a platoon commander.

Needless to say, among these ten thousand elite soldiers, there were another thousand calvaries!

"Good! Looking sharp, appearing strong!"

General Fei Long patrolled around and noticed the calvaries. He nodded his head in satisfaction. "With such strong soldiers, we can escort the king safely if anything were to happen!"

He was clear that they only had the chance if his own calvaries were on par with Yuan Country's calvaries.

"Congratulations on General's return!"

Wu Wudao was smiling at one side. "Our country governor trust you enough to pick you for this conference!"

"A general who loses his war, what more can I say?"

General Fei Long slowly looked around and to the direction of Xia Country. "This time, we might be able to see the Xia royal family and that Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master at the conference."

"Fang Yuan!"

At the mention of his name, Wu Wudao's face became pale, and he was filled with hatred. "Since we want to deal with him, we need a foolproof plan. Contacting Yuan Country is only part of the plan. We still need to obtain information about him. As the saying goes, know yourself well, and know the enemy well..."

"This of course!"

General Fei Long nodded his head. "I have sent people to investigate on that person's spiritual flower and spiritual grass array. It is indeed powerful! However, it has a major weakness. It is extremely strong in defence, but it cannot be used in attack! It will be rendered useless at the upcoming conference!"

A spiritual knight's ability was mysterious and could appear in

many forms. They had obviously taken Fang Yuan's skill in botany as a specific spiritual knight spiritual technique.

"That's good news!"

Wu Wudao squinted his eyes. "In this conference, either we do nothing, or we strike hard! We cannot give them any more chances!"

Chapter 180: Breakthrough

"The vast wilderness, and the grazing sheep..."

Looking at the vast plains, Fang Yuan sighed.

Autumn was the season for the plains to flourish. It was extremely relaxing to speed through here on a horseback.

Behind him was a 1,000-men strong army marching slowly, and the atmosphere was solemn.

Among these soldiers were different armour and flags, and it was obvious that they were not from the same army.

"Is this your first time here, Prefecture Master Fang?"

A horse emerged from the troops and arrived by the side of Fang Yuan; it was Clear Spring Prefecture Master Lan Xiaosheng.

Although he appeared to be close to Xia Country, he was in fact not. He felt uncertain about the conference. Looking at how Secluded Mountain Prefecture and the Xia Royal Family became closer, he immediately tried to show his affectionate side.

The Yuan Wu conference was an opportunity for all of them to unite together.

He was rather interested in Fang Yuan.

Fang Yuan had to admit that his respectfulness made him hard to be disliked - if only he was not a fence-sitter, unwilling to be loyal to any side.

He could be sure that Lan Xiaosheng would record down anything that he had said, but only until the day that Fang Yuan would be defeated, he would not outrightly oppose him!

There was nothing about loyalty here, he only cared about his own survival.

"Indeed, it's my first!"

Fang Yuan sighed. "I've heard that the plains are extremely vast. Even Yuan Country could take over only the most fertile lands and a few big cities but not the entire plains, and they even had to face the defiance from the small divisions in the area, is that right?"

"That's right!"

Lan Xiaosheng was familiar with the place. "The plains actually belonged to the different divisions, and even Yuan Country was formed by the biggest and strongest Golden Division. Even so, they could only take over the piece of small land near our territory... From another angle, we can actually say that they have protected us from the threats of the plains."

"The depths of the plains..."

Looking far, Fang Yuan felt excited. "I've heard that after that piece of land is the ancient path to the Da Qian empire..."

Although he had explored the empire in a dream world, he was still curious about the real Da Qian Empire.

...

At night.

Many tents were erected on the plains, and in the middle of the campsite was a fireplace, and food was cooking on it.

Soldiers were consuming their dried rations, holding on to their wooden bowls and waiting for a portion of soup to be scooped for them. The higher ranking officers had meat and soup, and dessert such as ginger biscuits.

"If we do not prepare, we would be out in danger!"

At a small distance away from the campsite was a small hill, and Fang Yuan laid there lazily.

Under him was a patch of soft grass, and by his ear was the occasional chirping of crickets. The grassy smell filled his nose and without even looking up, he could see the stars, the full moon and

the milky way... Everything was in sight.

"We are but a tiny dust compared to the universe, incomparable to the wonders of nature, but we have the most potential!"

Fang Yuan opened his wine pot and gulped down a large mouthful of wine.

The spiritual wine was extremely fragrant and a warm stream trickled down his throat into his belly. It was a warm and fuzzy feeling, and it gave out hints of spiritual energy, rejuvenating his body.

"This wine pot has its mystery in it, and the fact that I can drink such good wine every day makes it comparable to the Mountain River Pearl!"

With the shimmer of a spiritual glow on Fang Yuan's hand, the wine pot disappeared.

Ever since he started his training in his Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique, his appetite had grown, and the spiritual wine was but a small supplement for him.

If not for the Mountain River Pearl which stored heaps of spiritual rice and spiritual fruits, he could not sustain his diet for the entire journey.

As he looked at the campsite with the flicker of the fire, he laughed silently.

"Looking at my age, potential and the fact that I'm not part of the royal family of Yuan Country and Wu Country, I would be a threat to them! Am I sacrificing myself by going to the Yuan Wu Conference?"

Slowly, he stood up and closed his eyes. A spiritual meridian appeared on his body, and as it slithered around, it appeared illusionary.

"Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique!"

As compared to the cultivation of a dream master, the bottleneck for martial arts was much easier to break through.

Every time when Fang Yuan had time, he would focus on forming the spiritual meridian. Even if it would not increase his proficiency points, it would still deepen his understanding of the technique.

"The path of humans... The path of the Universe... Spiritual meridian! Using external energy to complement what the human body is lacking in..."

However, there was a little difference in his cultivation today.

Looking at the starry night sky, his mind clicked. Coupled with the strong foundations in his body, a mysterious change started to appear on Fang Yuan's body.

"Kacha!"

Suddenly, a soft explosion was heard in his body.

The spiritual energy around him swirled and was slowly absorbed by his body.

At that moment, Fang Yuan felt an accelerated absorption of elemental energy from Heaven and Earth!

He was shocked and appeared a little dazed. "This is... spiritual meridian!"

There was no path after Wu Zong.

However, the Wu Zongs in Da Qian Empire gathered and with their collective effort, they had managed to find a way.

Since Wu Zong was the extreme of the human body, it meant that it was necessary to take in energy from outside after obtaining elemental force. By taking in energy from outside, a spiritual meridian could be formed, which would increase the threshold of energy in the body!

This stage was known as the Meridian Opening Realm! It was comparable to the Elemental Opening Realm of the spiritual

knights.

"Because I am assimilating the spiritual meridian into my body, being a natural process, for every meridian formed I would increase my potential as a martial artist! Who can even imagine the power of the divine body after forming the maximum amount of spiritual meridians possible..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin and felt as though he could not accept the fact that there were changes to his own body.

"I knew that the Yuan Wu Conference was dangerous, and initially wanted to use it to pressurize myself into making the breakthrough!"

"Who would've thought that all it took was a moment to result in such a change. There is no need for me to risk it just for the breakthrough anymore!"

"Whoosh whoosh!"

Suddenly, a shadow leapt out of the campsite. Swiftly, it arrived on the hill and had an uneasy look. "Prefecture Master Fang, that was..."

"Oh, just a mere achievement in my cultivation of martial arts!"

Fang Yuan smiled reservedly.

"I see, you're indeed a talent!"

Lan Xiaosheng was generous with his praises. "Prefecture Master's talent is putting me to shame!"

He would not be able to understand the Meridian Opening Realm, and had thought that Fang Yuan had a small improvement in the Elemental Gathering Realm instead... If he could not understand, how could he tell the difference?

He was still full of admiration for Fang Yuan's talent.

"Prefecture Master Fang, your spiritual aura..."

He could still tell that his spiritual aura has changed, and looked suspicious.

"Oh, I've learnt a new spiritual technique. Was it the change in my spiritual aura that you have detected?"

Fang Yuan lied through his teeth.

"Oh, I see! With Prefecture Master Fang, we will be able to achieve what we want in this Yuan Wu Conference!"

Seeing the expressionless Fang Yuan, Lan Xiaosheng forced a helpless and awkward laughter, and he looked away, lost.

...

The Yuan Wu Conference was a conference which involved the many countries in the mainland.

Of course, with the uprising of Yuan Country, their attitude had worsened.

They have chosen the boundary of the plains as the location for the conference, next to a lake.

As the countries started to arrive for the conference, more and more tents were being set up, and many different flags were flying. In the centre of all, there was a tall elevated platform being built.

Zhu, Qi, Kun, Hong and many other small countries have arrived. Putting their ceremonial contingent on display, the entire place looked rather majestic.

Fang Yuan was riding on a large horse and with much interest, he was learning to recognise the different flags under the coaching of Xie Lingyun.

As compared the countries who were geographically smaller than the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, Fang Yuan felt that his status was rather high. Even Zhu Country could be considered a big country.

"Where's Wu Country and Yuan Country?"

As they walked to the lakeside, their army started to pitch their tents. Fang Yuan looked at a distance and enquired.

"Obviously, they will be the last to arrive!"

Xie Lingyun was riding a white horse and was next to Fang Yuan. Wearing a veil, she concealed her face.

Suddenly, she stared at Fang Yuan. "Master, it seems that you have achieved a breakthrough? Even your aura feels different..."

Fang Yuan laughed but did not answer her. "Disciple, go have a look at your king."

This was the conference among the kings, and the king of Xia Country was here as well.

However, Fang Yuan felt pitiful after seeing him. He was a pale looking middle-aged man plagued with illnesses. He could not even speak properly and was exactly like a puppet.

It was obvious that this puppet king in Xia Country was of no use. All the country's affairs were single-handedly handled by the beautiful disciple of his.

"In this conference, Wu Country would surely force me into a corner. Master, you must help me!"

Xie Lingyun gave a pitiful look.

"Hehe... Even if they forget about you, they would also find trouble for me!"

Fang Yuan squinted his eyes. "This is good... We can settle this once and for all!"

"Wooo! Wooo!"

The bugle of the armies was sounded.

From afar, at the horizon, there was a thin black line.

A large troop was formed up and making their way forward.

"Wu Country's soldiers!?"

Xie Lingyun softened her voice. "The country governor of Wu Country is here!"

Fang Yuan remained silent.

The 10,000-men strong army approaching in their formation struck fear in all of the smaller countries.

As the formation reached the lakeside, the drumbeat halted. The soldiers in the formation split up respectfully, revealing a pathway. A man in golden armour galloped on his horse and arrived in front.

"This country governor of Wu Country seems to be a valiant warrior, and I've heard that he is not even 40 yet! Not bad indeed..."

Fang Yuan nodded his head, and at the same time, his spiritual sense could detect that he was being looked at by two enemies.

"Mm, one of them is Wu Wudao, and the other is General Fei Long. No strangers!"

He looked over and smiled.

However, as for Wu Wudao and General Fei Long, both of them acted as though they had met a strong adversary. They approached the golden-armoured warrior and started mumbling to him.

As the golden-armoured warrior removed his helmet, a face with distinct features was revealed. As he looked over, he had the vibe of a great warrior who had the ability to take over anything he wanted.

Although he was not Wu Zong, as the leader of the country, together with his army formation, Xie Lingyun was equally pressured by him, as she was by Wu Wudao!

"Mm, both Wu and Yuan Country are here!"

Xie Lingyun felt a little breathless and gently patted herself to awaken her mind.

Looking in the direction of North, there was a fine black line rushing towards them from the horizon, and it was a shocking scene to behold!

Chapter 181: All Ready

In the north.

Rumbling noises were heard. Sand was drifting in the wind as the ground shook.

There were rows of cavalries. Like dark clouds, they were as strong as a hurricane and as terrifying as a tsunami. Nothing could stand in their way.

At the Crescent Moon Lakeside, the soldiers from the small country were panicking. No matter how much the commanders were reprimanding them, the situation was not improving and they all felt as though something bad was about to happen.

Even the much stronger soldiers of Wu Country appeared a little panicky, moments before the impending arrival of the soldiers from the Yuan Country. This frightened Fang Yuan a little.

In front of the Yuan Country's soldiers, even if the soldiers of the Wu Country was strong, they were ultimately still inferior to them.

The horses were galloping at full speed, and there were more than ten thousands soldiers approaching.

As they reached the lakeside, the soldiers stopped in their tracks and started to set up their tents. In the centre of the tents, a giant golden tent was the first to be erected. The ground was laid with top quality sheep's wool. On the outside, it was decorated with gold foils, jewellery and jades. That tent looked like a palace and it repressed many other countries.

"That is the flag of the King of Yuan!"

Xie Lingyun looked at the flag that was displayed at the golden tent and was furious. "He is just a prince, and he thinks he can represent the whole country? What an arrogant guy!"

"They are stronger than us. What can we do about it?"

Fang Yuan was not bothered by that. "Since the ones in charge are here, we should go too!"

In fact, if the rest of the countries were to team up, Yuan Country would not be able to defeat the rest. However, the rest of the countries already had conflicts with each other, so how would they work together to defeat the enemy?

"Not to mention, Yuan Country has always wanted to attack the powerful countries like Xia and Wu Countries. The other kings will definitely stand aside to watch the show!"

With this understanding, Fang Yuan felt that the conference was rather useless.

After a short while, there was a procession. The kings appeared one by one and went to their seats.

Xie Lingyun however, bit her lip and went to Fang Yuan. "Master.....if something bad happens today, please do take care of your own safety!"

"I know!"

Fang Yuan knew very clearly that ever since he had the possibility of breaking through the Elemental Opening Realm, Xia Country was dependent on him. This was why Fang Yuan's safety was their top priority.

However, he couldn't say that to her and therefore just nodded his head slightly to acknowledge. The princess couldn't do anything about it.

The only thing she could do was to introduce the guests to Fang Yuan.

"That is the king of Qi Country. Qi Country is rich in salt and this is their advantage. Even though the citizens there are rich, not many good spiritual knights or Wu Zong are being cultivated from

there....."

Xie Lingyun introduced them one by one in detail to Fang Yuan. "Also, that man with the red face is the king of Kun Country. Even though the citizens living in the Kun Country are poorer, there is a stronger culture of martial arts there. Their citizens were brave enough to fight against soldiers from the Wu Country. In the previous battle of the Yellow Pool, under the leadership of General Fei Long, Wu Country took almost 5 years but barely defeated Kun Country. After the war, Wu Country had overspent their resources and from then, they had given up the idea of taking over Kun Country....."

Fang Yuan glanced at the king of Kun Country with an interesting look and realised that he was very capable. The king was a cultivator and was at the peak of the 12th Gate. He was an outstanding one among all other kings.

At that moment, a fat king sitting on the opposite saw Fang Yuan and greeted him humbly.

"Who is that?"

There was a saying that one should not go against another who is smiling at one. Fang Yuan looked at the flag that was behind the king and asked.

"That is the king of Zhu Country. He is a good old man. He has been well respected by his people and is similar to the previous kings in Xia Country!"

Xie Lingyun said that with a sarcastic tone.

Fang Yuan knew what she meant as he heard that. The king was a puppet as well, put in place to maintain peace in the country. It seemed that the king of Zhu Country was similar to the king from Xia Country.

However, Fang Yuan had created a mess in Zhu Country and even caught the King of Poison, Jie Wuming. Hence, Fang Yuan

was considered murderous and ferocious, and that was why the king was being respectful and fearful of Fang Yuan.

There was a specific etiquette in the Yuan Wu Conference.

At the platform, only kings could sit down. Others who were accompanying would have to stand by the side.

There was a year when the three Prefecture Masters of the Xia Country could only 'escort' the king of the Xia Country to the conference and could only protect him from behind.

Now, Fang Yuan and Xie Lingyun were also standing behind the king of Xia Country but this time, their positions were allocated slightly to the front.

'So is this the position that the Xia Country has managed to get from the previous conference?'

Fang Yuan knew that if he was to announce the Secluded Mountain Prefecture as a country on its own in this meet, he would be able to have his own position.

Of course, he would have to achieve that on his own and would have to deal with other countries first.

'I'm not sure what Yuan and Wu Country have prepared for us. I'm looking forward to it!'

Fang Yuan saw many of the kings sitting down and the musicians who were around them started to play some pieces to welcome them. Even though it sounded very ancient, Fang Yuan still enjoyed the music.

Such ceremony was a rare one.

Among the noises from the drums, the king of the Wu Country and the prince of the Yuan Country got down from their horses.

"It is rumoured that Wu Qiankun, the king of the Wu Country, is brilliant and good in martial arts. He is, therefore, a remarkable king who is determined to reform the country, making it stronger

day by day....Of course, ever since that defeat, his reputation was affected. Recently, there was also the trouble from Yuan Country...."

As Xie Lingyun said this, her voice became inaudible.

After all, if everything had gone smoothly, he might have been his husband.

However, no one could control the things that were happening. What had happened had already happened.

"Not too bad!"

Fang Yuan looked at Wu Wudao, who was standing behind Wu Qiankun and shook his head. He then looked at the group of people from the Yuan Country and asked. "What about that young lad over there?"

"He is the eighth son of King Yuan from the Yuan Country. His name is Ge Ritu, which meant brightness! Since he is young and has a strong family backing him, he is a suitable candidate for the next person to take over the throne."

Xie Lingyun raised her eyebrows.

When the eighth prince came, she looked very uncertain and realised that she kept looking at the prince, before feeling shy and angry at herself.

"You have sharp eyes indeed!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and shook his head. "Yuan Country has already been established but they still haven't been able to remove the original tribal habits. There will be conflicts and I'm afraid there will be a big trouble!"

Among all other countries, everyone believed that the eldest son in the family who be the one taking over the throne in future. Under the influence of the other countries, Yuan Country also paid attention to such matter.

Plus, with the shamans and the advanced medical skills, the lifespan of the people in Yuan Country had been extended. If this continued on, it would mean trouble in future.

It might even lead to a rivalry between siblings in the future.

Ge Ritu's eyes scanned across the kings from the south and noticed many pale, friendly and fearful faces. 'Indeed....it is true that people from the south are weak and they love internal conflicts. I will be able to rule this whole piece of land in future and this piece of land will be basking in brightness!'

Suddenly, he noticed a lady.

Her white dress was swaying and she looked graceful. She looked royal even with her emotionless look on her face and he was wavered by that.

'Since big brother has offered the princess from the Sunset Division to Father, which appeased him, I should not lose out too.'

He then stopped and asked with a southern accent. "You are....."

"Eighth Prince, she is the daughter of the king of Xia Country, Princess Lingyun!"

An official who was beside him replied.

"You're not bad! Very good!"

Ge Ritu laughed, making Fang Yuan a little displeased.

"Who are you then?"

Ge Ritu turned and noticed Fang Yuan.

"Eighth Prince!"

Wu Wudao then introduced with his malicious voice. "This is the top warrior from the South. He is the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master from Xia Country and his name is Fang Yuan! He is only 20 years old!"

"You are Fang Yuan!"

The Eighth Prince focused on Fang Yuan and said, "How does he fare against my top warrior in the Yuan Country? Zhuo Li Getu!"

The Eighth Prince scoffed and an angry-looking man came forward.

The man was 8 feet tall and he looked brute. His narrow eyes were glittering and he had a high nose bridge, which made him looked like a wolf and an eagle at the same time. He was wearing a plains robe but he revealed his chest and there was a green wolf head tattoo on it.

His name, Zhuo Li Getu, meant that he was fearless in the language of the plains.

The man had an immense amount of energy. From the way Fang Yuan judged him, he was a powerful Wu Zong and was superior to General Fei Long from Wu Country.

"I will bet with 100 battle horses and 10 gold coins that your warrior is inferior to mine!"

The Eighth Prince went forward and glared at the king from Xia Country. "How does this sound?"

"Cough..."

The king of Xia Country gave a cough and his face became even much paler.

Xie Lingyun couldn't bear the sight of this. She stood out and said, "Please show some respect, Eighth Prince! The conference hasn't even started and you are already breaking our agreement?"

Ge Ritu was startled when he heard this.

He then realised that he was just a prince and not a king. Plus, his position as the heir wasn't stable as well.

King Yuan had entrusted him to represent his country for this meet. If he were to cause any trouble just because he was too reckless, his brothers would definitely not let go of this golden

opportunity to put him down.

He then gave a cold smile and walked away as he returned to his seat.

The official heaved a sigh of relief and shouted with a deep voice. "All kings can start to inspect their soldiers!"

The Yuan Wu Conference was a platform for everyone to showcase their strength and to choose the leader of the conference!

Previously, this opportunity was only given to Yuan and Wu Countries.

If Wu Country was chosen, the plains would be peaceful and it would take advantage of its position as the leader of the conference to take over land as their territory.

If Yuan Country was chosen, knowing that the southern countries were weaker would make them send off a wave of nomads to the South to plunder from the people living there.

'No matter what..... this would not involve the people! No! These would not even involve the smaller countries....'

Fang Yuan took a glance the kings of the smaller countries and pitied them. "When a country's government is prosperous, the citizens will suffer. When there is war, the citizens will also suffer! Fortunately, this is an extraordinary world and cultivators like us can still survive!"

"Woo! Woo!"

The bugle was sounded, and it was the signal for the elite forces of every country to come out of their camps. Carefully, they lined up in a formation. Following the order that they were given, they marched past the elevated platform smartly.

Within minutes, there were hundreds and thousands of soldiers below the platform. Their armour were clanging and the swords were glittering in the sunlight, making the whole place much more

lively.

'Hmm, most of the elite soldiers are 4th Gate martial artists who have obtained inner power. The average body condition of these soldiers is very high.....'

Fang Yuan looked at the formation for a while and understood what was going on.

Chapter 182: Sudden Change

"Kill!"

Beneath the stage, nearly 10,000 Wu soldiers shouted in unison, bringing their morale to a peak.

Shortly after, another 5,000 cavalymen from Yuan Country rode past, demonstrating the skill of horseback archery. Each of them was well built, and while the formation was a little messy, it was filled with a barbaric aura. That sort of sharpness that only those who had undergone many bloody battles could exude made the leaders of various countries' expressions change.

"My king has an order!"

Eighth Prince Ge Ri acted as though as there was no one around and carried on. "For today's conference, the leader will be my country! Otherwise..."

Although he didn't explicitly say it out, all of the countries had some idea of what he meant.

It was time for the south to react to this provocation!

"He he!"

Upon hearing this, the King of Wu Country did not move, but Wu Wudao laughed coldly, "If the Eighth Prince is willing to pledge that after becoming allies, you won't invade the southerners' lands, what's stopping us from recognising you as the alliance leader?"

Naturally, this condition was not something he could agree to.

If he did, it would just show his enemies that he was weak, which would, in turn, allow Yuan Country to understand what the actual situation was and they would just force their way down south with more fervour.

In reality, people of the Yuan Country were very ambitious. Hence no matter what they obtained from the conference, it

wouldn't be enough to satisfy them, and they would just continue pillaging their way southwards. This was the common understanding of all countries.

At this point, all of them could only rely on the alliance to suppress these flames of arrogance and force the Yuan Country to know their place.

"The contingent inspection is over. Let the martial arts contest begin!"

As expected, the Eighth Prince did not make such a foolish pledge. Instead, he coldly snorted before changing the topic of conversation to something else.

If the contingent inspection was a representation of the strength of one's army's foundation, then the martial arts contest was a display of one's army's top-tier strength.

Especially if there were any disagreements between countries, they could be resolved through a contest.

However, at this point in time, the greatest problem on everyone's mind was the threat of Yuan Country's cavalrymen!

As a result, all of the kings were just gazing at each other in silence.

Under this shroud of noiselessness, it was the Xia Country's King that stood up first.

This man was not young, with a rather pale face but a very energetic voice. "I have few virtues and meager abilities, and since I ascended the throne, there have been countless natural disasters. Hence, I will at least help to secure the position of a virtuous man. Secluded Mountain Prefecture's Head, Fang Yuan, is here today. He is a man with great morals and the Secluded Mountain Prefecture belongs to him. I am willing to give him land to set up..."

"Wait!"

Wu Country's King interrupted loudly.

"Does Xia Country's King mean that he wants to give some land to Prefecture Head Fang and make him a king? Where would his land be?"

"Naturally it will be the Secluded Mountain Prefecture!"

Xie Lingyin rebutted.

"He he..."

Shaking his head, Wu Qiankun responded, "Unless my eyes are failing me, on the current maps, your country has already ceded the area of Secluded Mountain Prefecture to my country. The only way you can give him land to make him king is to take other people's land."

Once these words left his mouth, not only was Xie Lingyin enraged, but even Lan Xiaosheng felt a little anxious.

"You're right!"

A crisp voice echoed out, causing many people to look in that direction in disbelief. It was Fang Yuan!

"This Secluded Mountain Prefecture originally belonged to Xia Country! Only much later was it given to Wu Country!"

Fang Yuan spoke with great gusto, as though as he was very confident. "I then took it back from the hands of Wu Country after a great battle. Moreover, I also established a pact with Wu Country that they would not violate our borders for a hundred years, and there's a contract as proof. Since the ancient times, this has been the proper way to obtain a country!"

This so-called 'proper way to obtain a country' was essentially just one point: wielding absolute power!

When this was mentioned, a few members of the Wu Country were infuriated.

This was especially so for General Feilong and Wu Wudao. Their

previous defeat could be said to be the greatest disgrace of their lives.

'This person must be insane. Does he not know that he has become a thorn in my side? This conference will where he dies!'

Wu Wudao plotted in his heart as he looked towards Eighth Prince.

Eighth Prince also looked over at the same time, and it was like he understood Wudao's intentions as he said, "You men of the south are so wishy-washy. For land, it naturally belongs to whoever occupies it, and if you want to reason at this conference, then do so through the martial arts contest!"

'In plain, doesn't it mean a fight to the death?'

Upon hearing this, Fang Yuan rolled his eyes secretly.

The only person representing the Secluded Mountain Prefecture was him, hence he had to fight.

When that time came, any means necessary could be used.

Regardless how devastating the Yuan Country was, they could only mount a single campaign towards the south. Eventually, they would have to return to the plains, and it would be the lower class families that would be broken up due to the battles.

However, if a spiritual knight of the Elemental Opening Realm appeared, all countries would be easily bullied by that individual.

The implications of which were very clear to those who knew of this possible situation.

If Fang Yuan hadn't broken through to the Meridian Opening Stage, he wouldn't have dared to enter this tiger's den with such confidence.

"Yes!"

Wu Qiankun was the first to agree.

The cause for his loss earlier was largely Fang Yuan, hence there was naturally more animosity towards him.

Even though they had a non-aggression pact with the Secluded Mountain Prefecture for 100 years, it didn't mean that he couldn't act against Fang Yuan himself.

"Master?"

Xie Lingyin appeared a little pale and crept closer to Fang Yuan. "Wu Country has many capable men. You can't go against them, so why don't you wait for an opportunity in the future!"

"There's no need for that!"

Fang Yuan waved her off.

Wasn't all the waiting he did just for this opportunity to give everyone a shock?

A person with the potential to advance to Elemental Opening Stage was a genius and had to be killed off early. However, for someone that had already advanced to that stage, he would be miles ahead of others, and they would have to bow down to him.

"You guys, who're coming to meet his or her death?"

Entering the arena, Fang Yuan stared down the people all around with a fierce aura emanating from him.

When General Feilong's and Wu Wudao's eyes met his, they could feel a chill run down their spine, as though as they had done something wrong.

The might of a person could suppress multiple generals!

The next strongest person in Yuan Country after Ge Ritu, Zhuoli Getu, licked his lips, and his blood seemed to start boiling.

"Since it's a matter of the secluded mountain, naturally the Wu Country will send someone!"

Just as Wu Qiankun was about to suggest General Feilong, he saw

an expression of shock on Feilong's face, and he didn't feel very good inside while he said, "I'll have to trouble our Imperial Advisor!"

"Good!"

With a wave of his white sleeves, Wu Wudao entered the arena.

There was a death grudge between him and Fang Yuan as an Elemental Gathering Stage disciple of his was killed by Fang Yuan.

If he wasn't injured back then, he would have fought Fang Yuan to the death much earlier.

"Greetings, I am Wu Wudao!"

Wu Wudao took a step forward, and his aura was as grand as a tall mountain, "Secluded Mountain Prefecture Head, you killed my beloved disciple and occupied my country's land. I have to bring this to a conclusion today!"

"Exactly what I was thinking!"

Fang Yuan chuckled, but inside he was contemplating whether to go all out from the start and use his martial arts to kill this old fogey in a few blows.

'One punch? That's a little too shocking right?'

'Two punches then, but it's still very shocking, three punches seem fine...'

'Heck it, why am I thinking so much, it's still better to kill him with one punch!'

If Wu Wudao could hear Fang Yuan's thoughts, he would probably have spat out a mouthful of blood there and then.

"Wooo woooo!!!"

However, just as Ge Litu was very excited to watch the fight, a deep horn sounded out from afar. It came gradually closer, bringing with it a smoke signal.

"What? It's the Grey Wolf Horn?"

Everyone was puzzled, and their mysterious gazes fell onto Ge Litu.

In that moment, Ge Litu felt as though as he had fallen into a pack of wolves.

"Let's go! Zhuoli Getu, go to escort the messenger. I'll coordinate the men!"

The Yuan Country had a system: whenever the Grey Wolf Horn was sounded, it meant that a sudden change had occurred in the country!

With this scene unfolding before them, even the Eighth Prince didn't have the mood to sit around, so he stood up and got ready to leave immediately.

"Wait! The ceremony isn't over yet..."

While Wu Qiankun put on a front, he secretly ordered General Feilong to mobilise the army, but still with a sheepish smile on his face. "Since Eighth Prince is here on behalf of your father, how could you leave in advance?"

"I'm not one of you! So why do I have to care about the rules of you southerners?"

The problems in his country were very pressing, almost as though as his eyebrows were on fire, hence Ge Ritu shouted rudely as such before striding off the stage.

Many elite sharpshooters followed closely behind, guarding him.

"Sigh.....It seems like there's really something important happening in Yuan Country!"

The King of Xia Country gazed upon the figures of the young prince and his entourage that faded away on the horizon, and suddenly suggested, "Why don't we postpone the conference for now?"

"But of course!"

"I support this move!"

The other kings were moved by this suggestion. All of them couldn't wait to leave, consolidate their men, and inquire about what had happened.

'What a pity... to let this kid escape!'

No matter how unwilling Wu Wudao was, he could only back down, returning to Wu Qiankin's side.

"However... "

Wu Qiankun nodded his head, "Fellow kings, please do not be in such a hurry to leave. This sudden change in the plains could be a good thing for us!"

"What a pity..."

No one knew that Fang yuan had the same idea as Wu Wudao, and at the same time, he was shocked by the recent developments.

What kind of catastrophe could have happened in the Yuan Country such that it caused the Eighth Prince to become so flustered?

...

That night, Fang Yuan and those in the higher echelons obtained a detailed report.

"Collapse of the country..."

After hearing this news, Xie Lingyin remained the calmest in the room, "Could it be that the old king's body was in a critical condition? That's why it was the Eighth Prince that came for the conference?"

"Impossible!"

In a moment, this thought was eliminated from her mind.

"If this was the case, then how could there have been this large a

commotion. From the way that the Eighth Prince rushed back with his army, he was obviously not aware of what had happened. He was caught with his pants down!"

"Naturally!"

Fang Yuan agreed, "All princes of Yuan Country have their own subordinates and armies. Even if they were deemed to be backup kings, it would be a very dangerous time for them, not to mention if they were outside..."

"At this point, since the elite forces of our countries are here, if we muster a decisive blow, it could disrupt the leadership of the enemy..."

Lan Xiaosheng grabbed her fan, even breathing a little more roughly than before.

"That's not possible!"

This proposal might have been very tempting, but as quickly as Xie Lingyin's eyes lit up, they fizzled out as she looked outside the encampment.

All of the countries' armies were not only very far away, but also on guard. Obviously, their motives were not aligned.

"Even.....Even if all of our countries go into battle and wipe out the Yuan Country, there would still be other families in the plains that will rise up.....Once their forces are ready, they would still continue to head southwards."

Fang Yuan shook his head in frustration. This was the inevitable clash between the farming culture and nomad culture.

Farmers wanted to occupy the plains, and throughout history, unless there were industrial revolutions, they would either fail or become culturally assimilated without any other possible options available.

"Now I wonder what Wu Qiankun's reaction will be?"

Xie Lingyin's eyes lit up again, turning to face the encampment of the Wu Country.

Chapter 183: Forced

In the Wu Country's tents, the candles were burning brightly.

As one of the stronger country in the area, Wu Qiankun's news was undoubtedly more detailed than that of Xia Country's.

"The First Prince has invaded Sunset Division and presented Purple Dream Princess to the king. Elated as he was, he invited her into his tent before dying abruptly. Purple Dream Princess is nowhere to be found... is this a revenge plot for the fallen soldiers?"

Wu Qiankun clenched the piece of message and he was in disbelief. "Their king has spent half of his life fighting wars and has fought a name for himself. In the end, his life was ended by a woman, who would have guessed..."

"He deserved it!"

"This old thief, he's finally dead!"

As the king, he had to be mindful of his words and expression. However, Wu Wudao and General Fei Long had no considerations, and both of them appeared elated.

The Yuan King was a cruel man. He had attempted to invade the South many times and had no restraint in anything that he did. His hands were splashed with blood from countless people, and even the Wu Country had once suffered an invasion which involved 18 cities being taken down by the Yuan Country, and the casualty rate was extremely high.

Most importantly, this person was extremely cunning and was suspicious of everyone. He was like a poisonous snake!

Such an easy death made Wu Qiankun feel as though he was dreaming.

"If not for Ge Ritu, who led his army back to resolve this issue

using military force, I would have thought that this might be their plan to confuse us..."

Looking at the ministers below, he smiled bitterly.

"My king! This is a good opportunity! And a rare one too!"

General Fei Long's eyes burned with passion. "There is internal conflict among the foreigners. If we gather our infantry and create trouble for them in the Dragon City... Even if we cannot destroy Yuan country completely, we can at least cripple them..."

As he spoke, his voice became increasingly soft.

"Hehe... With all the other countries outside, why should we be the first one to strike?"

Wu Wudao smiled coldly. "I have understood it now. On this piece of land, every country is in defence. Whoever who strikes first will die! Furthermore... what do we stand to gain by destroying Yuan Country? Do you think we can convert the grass plains into farms, and subsequently reward the soldiers with it? If they decide the capital to be at the garrison, then we would need to spend huge amounts of money and effort before being able to take them down. There might even be an impending doom for us in the future, and this has all happened in history before!"

"So do we wait and do nothing?"

General Fei Long replied, unconvinced.

"Of course not!"

Wu Wudao held his fists and bowed at Wu Qiankun. "King! The chaos in Yuan Country and the fact that they have no leader now means that you can contest the appointment as the alliance leader! Thereafter, you can gather all the countries to come together to take down Dragon City and support the First Prince in becoming their new king!"

"This..."

Wu Qiankun's eyes glittered.

The alliance leader would be the leader in name to lead and bring soldiers into alliance! It was unbelievable to be able to pressure the Dragon City and choose the next king of the Yuan Country!

"That's right!"

General Fei Long answered loudly. "We stand to gain a lot from this! Firstly, we can pressure the many countries to stand on our side. Gathering our influence, we will become a force to be reckoned with! After gathering our influence, the princes who would want to become the crown prince would have to establish relations with us! Our country can benefit from both sides!"

"And this is only the first advantage!"

Wu Wudao twirled his moustache. "Based on the power we can gather, the truth is that we still cannot completely exterminate Yuan Country. Supporting the First Prince is in preparation of the future."

"Wise words, Imperial Advisor!"

Wu Qiankun felt that there was much to be explored.

In getting involved with the Yuan Country's internal affairs, the future for Wu Country would be more or less decided. The grass plains would no longer be prone to invasion. The only thing to do would be to train up a deputy. If well performed, generations of alliance leaders from the Wu Country would become the king of the plains, and the plains would be well protected!

Not just that, everyone would be used to the outcome in time to come!

Once Yuan Country had been taken over completely, and with the current power of the Wu Country, their collective power would be increased by folds! Wu Country would become the strongest in the region, and would be one step closer to becoming the alliance leader!

Of course, all these had to be done slowly, and might even take more than a generation's time.

However, if they were to persevere, they would ultimately be an unmatched power! The most important was that their plans were all gradual and would likely not be met with a lot of resistance.

"This is... a plan to unify the whole region!"

Wu Qiankun became increasingly excited. "Even if it takes my life, I must complete the first step, as a foundation for generations to come!"

"We will put our lives on the line for Wu Country!"

Wu Wudao and General Fei Long kneeled down, bowed and both of them were burning with passion and loyalty for the country.

...

The second day.

"What? Is the conference re-opening? So quickly?"

In the campsite of the Xia Country, Fang Yuan and company received the news.

It was a messenger from the Wu Country, and his face was gleaming with happiness. "Regarding the Yuan Country's affairs, my king has already received news, and is intending to discuss with every country over the conference."

After the messenger took his leave, Xie Lingyun and the rest were lost in thoughts.

"The chaos in Yuan Country is natural. It seems that Wu Country wants to take action now!"

Lan Xiaosheng folded his foldable fan and rhythmically slapped in his other palm. "Princess and Fang Yuan, what are your plans?"

"We'll react to whatever happens. Let's go take a look!"

Fang Yuan looked in the direction of Dragon City, the capital city

of Yuan Country. He could feel a tinge of uneasiness.

He thought of the Eighth Prince from Yuan Country, and his formidable influence and power. Even with so much power, he still became flustered the moment he received the smoke signal.

The Wu Country had an ulterior motive for this conference. Would Fang Yuan let them have their way?

A row of people walked up to an elevated platform. Subconsciously, Xie Lingyun and Lan Xiaosheng's eyelids twitched.

There were many flags being positioned around the platform, and Wu Qiankun was wearing a crown. He was dressed in a dragon's robe and sat in the leader's seat. Many servants surrounded him, and the entire scene was majestic beyond words.

"This is the alliance leader's seat!"

Xie Lingyun shook her head. "Wu Country did not wait for the voting from the other countries, and claimed the appointment for themselves?"

"Don't say that, Lady Xie!"

Wu Wudao walked out from the side and laughed. "Yuan Country's king has just died. My country king is not appointed as the alliance leader with the recommendation from Qi, Zhu and Kun Country. How is this unfair?"

"When was this?"

"Last night!"

Wu Wudao smiled and felt that the depression that was in him for the past few days had all been let out.

"King of Xia Country, you're late. Hurry up and ask the alliance leader for forgiveness!"

One of the small country governors came out, only to put Xia Country on a spot.

They were clear about the fact that the chaos in Yuan Country would lead to the inevitable uprising of Wu Country. The only way was to establish good relations with them and stand on their side.

"I... I..."

The king of Xia Country was only a puppet. He could not even complete a proper sentence now.

Xie Lingyun quickly showed a hand sign. Immediately, two servants supported the king of Xia Country to pay respects to Wu Qiankun. "Greetings, alliance leader!"

"No need for formalities!"

Wu Qiankun waved his hand.

"After being recommended by many countries to become the alliance leader, I am fearful. I will do my best and will not let everyone down!"

Suddenly, he stood up and looked in the direction of Dragon City in Yuan Country. "Yuan Country is also part of the alliance. However, they are in a state of chaos now because of the death of their king. After this conference, I shall bring every country in this alliance together to head towards Dragon City to bring peacekeeping efforts to them and to protect the royal family, ensuring the survival of the late king's descendants!"

It was always important to sound noble.

As Wu Qiankun shared his noble objective, many country governors agreed in unison.

"Alliance leader, you are compassionate!"

"This is what needs to be done!"

In reality, everyone knew what would happen if troops were to enter Yuan Country.

"Good!"

Wu Qiankun was flushed. "Today we shall drink blood and swear to make our alliance official. We will look out for each other and enjoy good times together. Those who betray us, we will deal with them together!"

With the wave of his head, an official carried a bull's head and walked up the platform.

As the alliance leader, Wu Qiankun would not personally kill an animal. He only had to demonstrate the action of killing it.

Not long after, cups of blood wine were distributed to the several country governors.

Fang Yuan was observing from the sidelines.

The country governors from Zhu, Kun and Qi Country were all pale, but all of them did not hesitate to gulp the cup of blood. They were all fearful of what Wu Qiankun could do to them.

'Everything is now official!'

Fang Yuan looked down and stared coldly. "Next up... They will surely kill one person as a form of warning and sacrifice, right?"

Indeed, at the next moment, Wu Qiankun's swept the crowd with a sinister look.

"Alliance leader!"

At that moment, the Qi Country Governor leapt out. "The essence of an alliance is trust. Today, in the conference, we have a country who is untrustworthy! Xia Country Governor, since you've agreed on a marriage with Wu Country, why did you go back on your words? Also, regarding the rebellion in the Secluded Mountains Prefecture, why did you cover up for the mastermind? What are your intentions?"

"This..."

Against such a huge pressure from everyone, even Xie Lingyun found it hard to deal with.

"This is Xia Country's internal affairs! As an outsider, what right do you have to interfere?"

Fang Yuan stood out from the row. Disregarding the stares from everyone around, he calmly continued. "Especially all of you country governors! Today, Wu Country can abruptly interfere in Yuan Country's internal affairs, and tomorrow all of you would do the same. Even if all of you do the same one by one, it would be equally detrimental! Remember what happened to Yuan Country today! Your country could end up like Yuan Country or Xia Country one day!"

"What audacity!!!"

Wu Qiankun was fuming mad. "You dare to be disrespectful in front of me?!"

In reality, this was just an excuse.

The main point was that Fang Yuan had managed to explain everything that he had done and everything that he had planned to do.

"Alliance leader, Fang Yuan was the one who opposed our soldiers. He should have been given the death sentence! Today, he was disrespectful in front of you, and is another offence! Please execute him!"

Wu Wudao stood out and said coldly.

"That's right. In front of all the armies, discipline and order are of utmost priority. Please execute him!"

General Fei Long knelt down and pleaded Wu Qiankun as well.

'Righteousness would be the best excuse to kill someone! If we were all normal people, and if I were to encounter this situation, I would surely die!'

Fang Yuan solemnly thought to himself.

He finally knew how it felt like that if everyone were to decide

that he was guilty, he would be guilty!

Every country's representative was here. With so many people accusing him at the same time, it was indeed something to be feared.

Of course, the most important was the oncoming soldiers that were slowly making their way to surround him, together with the leaders, General Fei Long and Wu Wudao.

"Alliance leader has his orders. This is not a drill. Be mindful that this person is extremely powerful, and all are instructed to protect your respective country governors..."

Wu Wudao's face was flushed with excitement. He had the thrill as though he was about to take his revenge.

"How dare you! What do you intend to do to my imperial advisor?"

Xie Lingyun stood up with a serious look on her face.

As for Lan Xiaosheng? He kept on retreating and was already nowhere to be seen.

"Haha... Lingyun, you and your country have made the right decision!"

Fang Yuan stood in the middle, scanned his surroundings and suddenly broke out into laughter.

Chapter 184: The Power of Wu

On the elevated platform at the conference.

Fang Yuan stood out and looked around.

Among the many who were accusing him, Wu Wudao and General Fei Long were smiling cunningly, as they slowly approached him.

The other country governors were either looking coldly at the scene or were looking with anticipation.

After all, this was a gifted 20-year-old boy who had obtained elemental force! His future was too uncertain, and he could likely attain the Elemental Opening Realm in the future!

Of course, they were not willing to see a person with such power; it would be a threat to the region.

At this point in time, Wu Zongs and spiritual knights of the different countries were guarding their country governors closely. A few of them arrived at the scene with menacing looks on their faces, as though they were instructed to join in.

The scene had escalated to a point of no return!

"Kill this person, and bring his head back as a sacrifice!"

Wu Qiankun bit his teeth and exclaimed.

His commanding voice was like an order, and suddenly both sides roared into action.

"Die!"

General Fei Long was taking the lead in front. An energy field taking up the shape of a dragon wrapped around his body, and out of a sudden, he struck 18 palms outward, releasing his elemental force. The energy field spread and the soldiers were forced to retreat. As a wine cup landed on the floor, the entire elevated platform was wrecked.

"God Searching Palm!"

Simultaneously, Wu Wudao struck at the same time.

He was extremely fearful of Fang Yuan and therefore used his killer move as the first move.

"Whoosh!"

Accompanying his hand movements were the glitter of spiritual light. A translucent palm print appeared and then vanished into thin air.

This God Searching Palm was the counter to Zu Qiao ad Divine Spirits. It was known to be untraceable and extremely deadly. Previously, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture Master Liu Yan was struck by this palm which led to the destruction of his Zu Qiao. Even Fang Yuan might succumb to his palm.

"Kill!"

It was not just the both of them attacking; the Wu Zongs and spiritual knights from the other smaller countries were helping out as well.

Many variations of spiritual techniques and martial arts techniques were all targeted in the centre.

"Rumble!"

"Woof! Woof!"

In the mid-air, a few spiritual beasts pounced upwards, guarding the space above. There was a vague silhouette of a person above as well.

There was no way out!

Facing such an all-around attack, the Fang Yuan who once cultivated in both martial arts and spiritual techniques would still not stand a chance. Even if he were to cultivate and reach the peak of the Elemental Gathering Stage, even with the help of his spiritual beasts, he would still have no way of escaping!

But he was no longer the unskilled Fang Yuan he once was!

Both General Fei Long and the God Searching Palm were coming for him, and a few other Wu Zongs and spiritual knights were attacking from behind as well.

However, all Fang Yuan did was to take in a deep breath.

"Phew!"

As his energy level surged, a rugged and highly visible spiritual meridian appeared on his body!

The second stage of Wu Zong, the Meridian Opening Realm!

"God Searching Palm!?"

He appeared calm. As he stretched out his right hand, he used two fingers to press his forehead.

"Kacha!"

In mid-air, a palm print appeared as though it was about to strike Fang Yuan. However, it cleanly landed into Fang Yuan's trap, and a distinct cracking sound was heard. Within seconds, it was destroyed like a soap bubble.

"Peng! Peng!"

General Fei Long's eyes widened. Taking this opportunity, he crazily struck numerous palms around Fang Yuan. "18 Palms of Fei Long!!"

"Rumble!"

After the loud sound, Fang Yuan's clothing was torn, revealing his muscular build and the distinct veins on him. Mockingly, he grabbed General Fei Long by his wrist. "How's that? Enough?"

"Impossible!"

General Fei Long and Wu Wudao's eyeballs almost dropped out.

Even if Fang Yuan used a rough technique to break through to Wu Zong, giving him a hardy body, but General Fei Long was also a

Wu Zong! Furthermore, General Fei Long had stellar results in many wars. Using his killer move, even if he was targeting a metal statue, he would still be able to beat it into a piece of metal chunk!

But what happened to Fang Yuan? Was he left completely unharmed?

General Fei Long was shocked beyond words. As Fang Yuan grabbed onto his wrist, he felt as though Fang Yuan's palm was made out of iron. As his expression changed, he wailed. "Imperial Advisor, save me..."

"Kacha!"

As he ended his sentence, his entire arm was crushed under Fang Yuan's grip. Treating him like rubbish, Fang Yuan threw General Fei Long away.

"Get... Lost!"

As Fang Yuan shouted, the spiritual meridian on him glowed, and suddenly the glow was transferred to his right hand, as he struck his fist out once again.

"Rumble!"

The elevated platform shook and a few pieces of supporting wood broke, as though it might crumble anytime.

The surrounding Wu Zongs and spiritual knights all spat out blood and flew backwards. Wu Wudao, who was in front, was punched squarely in the chest and crashed into the platform. There was a gaping hole in his chest, and his internal organs were visible.

Who would have thought that a single punch could be this powerful!

"Impossible!"

The table flipped in just a matter of seconds.

Even Xie Lingyun was in a daze.

"This... this is not a spiritual technique! But... pure martial arts..."

General Fei Long spat out three mouthfuls of blood before struggling to ask. "What is this technique? Could you have... broken through!"

In order to defeat so many Wu Zongs and spiritual knights at once, there was only one possibility. He must have achieved the Elemental Opening Realm!

"Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique!"

Since breaking through, this was the first time Fang Yuan had used all this power, and it felt different from before.

"After the Opening Meridian Stage, my elemental force will surge, but more importantly, I have the resistance to spiritual spells!"

Looking at the few spiritual knights who were spitting out blood, he mulled.

Just now, the spiritual techniques and curses were targeted at him. However, with the spiritual meridian protecting his body, a simple tremor would destroy all spiritual techniques and curses, and could even result in a backlash to whoever summoned it!

'This is such a contradiction. The higher the level of Wu Zong, the greater the number of spiritual meridians, and the greater the resistance to stronger spiritual spells...'

'If there was a presence of an Elemental Opening Realm spiritual knight secretly helping them, then I would not be able to withstand their collective power. However, all these useless people are just here to sacrifice their lives!'

Amidst the silence, Fang Yuan stood on the elevated platform and looked around. Not one country governor dared to look at him in the eye.

Even Wu Qiankun was rooted to his chair, his face completely pale.

"Never would I have thought that I would arrive at this day!"

Fang Yuan clenched his fist tightly.

This was power great enough to suppress the entire region!

At this point, Fang Yuan unknowingly looked at his stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 18

Spirit: 18

Magic: 9.9

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Dream Master (Peak of Elemental Gathering Realm)], Wu Zong (First Meridian)

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 2) (1%)], Ecstasy Spell, Shadowstep

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (First Meridian) - Combining the essence of Eagle Claw Iron Skin and the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique, this is a unique creation. It is mainly powered by elemental force and is supplemented with the Giant Spiritual Strength. Defence is strengthened, poison is strengthened, breath is strengthened and Yin properties are strengthened! Currently formed one spiritual meridian, and now gained one elemental power! Now with resistance to spiritual spells!"

Fang Yuan thought to himself. "As of now, I'm at the third elemental force. It seems that if normal Wu Zongs were to break through, they might be able to achieve 5 or 6?"

The third elemental force was equivalent to the combat power of

three Wu Zongs combined!

Furthermore, combat power could not be simply added up just like that.

"Have you broken through the Elemental Opening Realm?"

General Fei Long stood up straight like a pole stuck in the ground. His eyes were full of passion.

Fang Yuan could tell that this was a sincere question from a martial artist to inquire about his own martial arts cultivation.

"Is there really still a path after Wu Zong?"

General Fei Long appeared solemn. He approached Fang Yuan and gave him a respectful bow, and it seemed as though he wanted to die a gentleman.

"That's right. Spiritual knights have the Elemental Opening Realm, and Wu Zongs have the Opening Meridian Realm!"

His thirst for knowledge even on the brink of death made Fang Yuan's heart waver, as he returned a bow.

"Haha... I've started learning martial arts since I was 8, reached the 12th Gate when I was 30, and broke through to Wu Zong after another 20 years. I initially thought that I have reached a dead end, and therefore switched to become a general of the army. Ultimately, martial arts did not fail me!"

General Fei Long became even more serious and signalled with his hand. "Please! To die under a Meridian Opening martial artist is my honour!"

"General, don't!"

Wu Qiankun's expression changed.

Wu Wudao could not be saved, and he didn't want to lose another top-notch Wu Zong.

However, General Fei Long had already brushed aside all

thoughts of riches and fame. He had the pure mind as a martial artist and was begging Fang Yuan to kill him.

"Please!"

Fang Yuan was solemn. He channelled his energy to his right hand.

"Ha! Dragon God Searching Palm!"

General Fei Long suddenly became a shadow and rushed swiftly in front of Fang Yuan. As he concentrated his energy on his left hand, he slowly formed a dragon's claw with it.

"Third Elemental Force!"

Without using any techniques, Fang Yuan struck an ordinary fist out.

"Kacha!"

An immense amount of energy countered General Fei Long's force, and as if flowed through his arm into his body, it destroyed everything in its way.

"Pa!"

General Fei Long flew backwards, and his blood spurted out.

"Cough cough..."

Landing on a table, he crashed right into it, and he was coughing out blood. "Meridian Opening! Is that the path of a Wu Zong? What a pity... I won't be able to see that again..."

After finishing his sentence, he shut his eyes and stopped breathing!

"Imperial advisor! General!"

Wu Qiankun was in a daze, and his mind was lost.

Just moments ago he was suppressing every other country, and was the rightful alliance leader with best scholars and martial artists!

But now, both his trusty aides were killed instantly!

Anyone who would experience such a change in events would feel like dying.

Looking around, he realised that the many countries which previously sworn their alliance were flustered as well. A few of them started to look at Xia Country, with the intention of establishing good relations with them. None of them dared to look at him in the eye, but he was helpless.

In this world, power was absolute!

If Fang Yuan was still in the Elemental Gathering Realm, then they would do whatever it takes to kill him.

However, he has already broken through. The only logical thing to do was to become his ally. Who would even care about the alliance leader? Since the alliance leader was recommended by the masses, then he could also be impeached by the masses!

"I suddenly feel that, due to our divide in choosing the previous alliance leader, we should do the voting once more!"

The country governor of Kun Country spoke in a serious tone.

"Cough cough..."

The king of Zhu Country coughed and almost choked because this was also what he was about to say. Looking at the country governor of Kun Country with annoyance, he added. "That's true. I shall recommend the country governor of Xia Country. Does anyone have any opinions?"

"Of course not! Prefecture Master Fang is a gifted individual. Since he is the leader of the Secluded Mountain, he should start another country, and become the country advisor of the Secluded Country! He is the most appropriate candidate to be appointed as the alliance leader!"

Another country governor from a small country stood out, but all

he got were stares from the other country governors.

"Haha... Haha..."

Witnessing this scene, Wu Qiankun cracked a smile and started laugh hysterically. "Good! Good! Good! We are all good alliance members!"

He knew that even with all his bodyguards, his fate laid solely in Fang Yuan's hands!

Chapter 185: Secluded Country

'King, how could you die here?'

Although there were many bodyguards around, none of them could give Wu Qiankun a sense of security.

As he looked at the approaching Fang Yuan, even with his bodyguards by his side, he could feel the chills. He could vividly remember the time where he held back for the sake of the First Prince, the excitement he had from getting the appointment of alliance leader, and the plans he had in his mind in taking over the region.

'I still need to take over the region, how can this happen... how...'

His lips were chapped as though they were about to crack. "Grandmaster Fang, I would not mind to take up the role as your imperial advisor..."

"Peng!"

Without finishing his sentence, Fang Yuan had already come before him, striking his palm out forcefully.

"Pa!"

A distinct sound was heard.

Wu Qiankun rolled on the ground and spit out a mouth of blood and some broken teeth. Hastily, he tried to stop his bodyguards from retaliating.

He was a clever man.

Even though Fang Yuan could kill him with one finger, he had chosen to slap him without killing him. It was obvious that this was just a warning.

"I have been disrespectful. May grandmaster forgive me!"

What type of man was Wu Qiankun?

As a respectable country governor, he had to power to determine anyone's fate. Even though he was being ridiculed by Fang Yuan, he had no choice but to suck it up.

"Mmm, you're still sincere!"

Fang Yuan was very observant. After all that Wu Qiankun had gone through, if he could still act as though nothing had happened, Fang Yuan would immediately kill him.

Everyone's face was pale with fear. This was truly terrorizing!

Those at the Elemental Gathering Realm still had to be reserved. However, reaching the Elemental Opening Realm meant that one could do anything he wished!

More importantly, Fang Yuan had a new achievement in the realm of martial arts!

If this news were to spread, martial artists and Wu Zongs from all corners of the region would attempt to establish good relations with the most powerful influence of the region. The numbers of Wu Zongs would increase!

Needless to say, no one was powerful enough to plot against and kill a martial artist in the Meridian Opening Realm.

This was why Fang Yuan dared to kill in front of so many people, and even dared to slap Wu Qiankun! Wu Qiankun could do nothing but suck it up.

"I am incapable of being appointed as the alliance leader. Since Grandmaster Fang is the leader of the Secluded Mountains Prefecture, you are the rightful country governor of the Secluded Country. Please accept the appointment as alliance leader!"

Wu Qiankun gritted his teeth and forced his unhappiness within himself, as he smiled and offered Fang Yuan the appointment.

"I am a free person, and I don't want to be involved in the worldly affairs! I will not take up this appointment. However, I will

recommend the King of Xia Country. She has a good character and will be the best candidate!

Fang Yuan shook his head as he walked towards the campsite of Xia Country. He then carefully escorted the white-haired King of Xia Country to the seat of the alliance leader.

"Cough cough..."

Xie Lingyun contained her excitement and followed behind the King of Xia Country, as she mumbled something to herself.

"The alliance leader is here. Pay your respects!"

Fang Yuan scanned his surroundings and spoke with a threatening tone.

On the elevated platform, he could kill whoever he wished.

"Greetings, alliance leader!"

It was only natural to pay respects to those of a higher status. The Zhu Country Governor was the first one to greet, followed by the Kun Country, Hong Country...

Wu Qiankun was in a daze. Unknowingly, he followed the crowd and paid his respects as well.

"Please rise!"

King of Xia Country raised both of his hands. "Since we are all allies, the first thing is to decide on the boundaries. The Secluded Mountain Prefecture will now become a country in itself. This is a blessing we haven't had in many years! Bring the map here!"

A servant immediately brought a large map over and rolled it open.

"Please!"

King of Xia Country took the brush but handed it over to Fang Yuan.

"Mmm!"

Fang Yuan did not hesitate. He marked out a large area around the Secluded Mountain Prefecture, including his initial territory and almost half of the neighbouring Wu Country.

As Wu Qiankun saw this, his eyes turned red. This meant that his country's foundation would be ripped apart!

However, he was now the meat as to Fang Yuan was the knife. He could only suck it up. If only Fang Yuan was born in the royal family of the Wu Country!

"Wu Qiankun, do you have any objections to this arrangement?"

To be able to snatch such a large portion of land from Wu Country, the entire Xia Country was elated.

"Nope!"

Wu Qiankun forcefully replied.

"That's great!"

Xie Lingyun continued. "Let us not forget to acknowledge the documents for the new country! To go through the Land-Defining Ceremony, let us all celebrate for Secluded Mountain... Secluded Country!"

There was a proper procedure to start a country.

The most important was to go through the Land-Defining Ceremony. This would be initiated when the King of Xia Country and Wu Qiankun both allocate a piece a land to Fang Yuan as a representation of breaking land apart before defining it as a new territory.

Afterwards, every country had to use their country seals to acknowledge the territorial boundaries of the new country.

The last one to do so was Wu Qiankun. His eyes were sore. This was a first in Wu Country's history to give up land even before a war! However, he had no other choice!

After all, if he didn't agree to this, the Wu Country's royal family

might be exterminated!

After all the administrative work was completed, the Secluded Mountain Prefecture not only expanded in size in the direction of Wu Country but was also transformed into 'Secluded Country'! It might become the holy ground for martial arts in the region!

Even though King of Xia Country might be a puppet, the procedures made him worn out. Mustering his energy, he announced, "Done! Everyone is to abide by the new territorial boundaries, and no one is to get involved in his country's internal affairs! No disputes, but if you insist, you shall face the attack of every other country in the alliance!"

However, he could not step down yet. After Fang Yuan had shown his intention, he continued.

As soon as he spoke, the many kings heaved a sigh of relieved and looked happy. Even Wu Qiankun became more relaxed.

The Land-Defining Ceremony had utterly embarrassed Wu Qiankun, but it was not without benefits for him.

After all, after what had happened, the Meridian Opening Realm Wu Zong, leader of Secluded Country, was now on their side. He has also signed the agreement not to invade other territories, which was an assurance of peace in the immediate future. There was no more worry that this powerful leader might destroy other countries.

"Since this is settled, is the conference dismissed?"

Wu Qiankun smiled and asked earnestly.

"Dismissed? Why?"

Fang Yuan let out a casual laughter and argued back. "Actually, you make sense. Since Yuan Country is a part of the alliance, how can they be absent?"

"Right now, their country is plagued with internal conflicts. We

should proceed there to restore peace!"

This was Wu Wudao's initial plan, and Fang Yuan copied it entirely.

Since the alliance leader has been changed, no matter what Wu Qiankun's intentions were, he could only follow orders now.

"That's right! Imperial advisor's... No, King Fang's intention is also my intention!"

The King of Xia Country hurriedly agreed.

"Since the order has been given, everyone should be clear on what to do. What else is there to buck-pass? Servants, serve the blood wine! After drinking the blood wine and swearing allegiance to the alliance, everyone is to return to their military camps to bring their troops into Yuan Country!"

Fang Yuan felt into the mood of being the alliance leader as he gave the command.

The king of Xia Country immediately nodded his head continuously, like a chick pecking the ground.

Seeing this scene, all the country governors rolled their eyes discreetly, but on the outside, everyone agreed without hesitation.

...

Back in their military camp, Lan Xiaosheng was the first to receive them "Greetings, king!"

He appeared humble, but inside he felt regretful.

If he had known that Fang Yuan was this powerful, he should not have left them.

"Forget about it!"

Fang Yuan paid no attention to him. "Wait at the gates of the camp. If there are any visiting Wu Zongs, record their names down and welcome them into the tents."

As he spoke, he arrived at the main tent together with Xie Lingyun.

"Phew..."

Xie Lingyun heaved a long sigh before composing herself. As she examined Fang Yuan, she felt like she was facing a monster. "Master... When did you achieve your breakthrough to the Meridian Opening Realm?"

"I have had the feeling all along, and broke through when I felt it coming!"

As compared to the commotion Liu Yan had when he achieved his breakthrough, Fang Yuan's breakthrough was the classic example of a silent one, and shocked everyone only at the crucial moment!

Thinking about the fact that her master had broken through to the Meridian Opening Realm, and the fact that the pressure on Xia Country has been lifted, Xie Lingyun became ecstatic and extremely emotional. Her eyes were glittering as she looked at Fang Yuan, and her face appeared flushed.

"Hehe... I have had the honour of receiving a Wu Zong's inheritance, and in it was the description on the path after the Elemental Gathering Realm..."

Fang Yuan coughed a few times, but still had no choice but to explain it to her.

"Indeed!"

Xie Lingyun was not shocked; it was obvious that she had predicted this all along.

After all, no matter how talented Fang Yuan was, he could not discover the path after Wu Zong all by himself.

Wouldn't this render the teachings of martial arts in this region a joke?

Therefore, he must have stumbled upon a treasure left behind by someone from the mainland in order for Fang Yuan to have such an accomplishment!

"Alright, accompany Mu Li and the rest to prepare the troops and calvaries! It is no longer difficult to settle Yuan Country and start a prosperous dynasty on the mainland in the future!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand and dismissed Xie Lingyun.

There were 30,000 troops gathered here. There were the best of the best from every country, and almost 10,000 of them were elite infantry soldiers. If there was no proper planning and allocation, there might be a breakdown in communication.

In reality, if the Xia Country's troops were not the second-largest here excluding the Wu Country's, and without Fang Yuan's power, how would the many countries be so obedient to follow instructions?

"King!"

After Xie Lingyun had left, Lan Xiaosheng was waiting outside for a moment before reporting to Fang Yuan. He had a face of shock.

"Tell me! How many came?"

Fang Yuan casually asked.

"King, you have only tasked me to count in the Wu Zongs. As of now, there are three outside waiting. There are Zhang Xia, Liu Shanchuang and Li Hanghu!"

The other Wu Zongs had their reservations and would not boldly approach Fang Yuan. Therefore, those who came were either working along, or had minimal relations with their countries, and all were only committed to exploring the path of martial arts. These Wu Zongs were the perfect people to establish relations with.

"Invite them in!"

Fang Yuan waved his hand, and a few martial artists with unique energy types entered the large tent.

Fang Yuan had heard the names of this Wu Zongs before.

Liu Shanchuang was famous for his Judo Technique, and Li Hanghu's Multiple Technique was not to be belittled. As for Zhang Xia, disregarding everything else, the fact that she, a lady, could attain Wu Zong meant that her foundations were strong.

However, as the three Wu Zongs met Fang Yuan, they knelt down without hesitation. "Greetings, king. Please teach us the way to breakthrough!"

Chapter 186: The Plains

"I know the way to achieve the breakthrough for the Meridian Opening Realm!"

Fang Yuan glanced at the 3 Wu Zongs in front of him. "But I cannot teach you for free! We are no longer affected by worldly affairs, so I shall be straightforward. Work for me for 10 years, and I shall show you the way to the Meridian Opening Realm!"

In the Da Qian empire, although the techniques in the Meridian Opening Realm were rare, they were still not worth this much.

Needless to say, Fang Yuan was baiting them.

After the Meridian Opening Realm, what about tips for forming the spiritual meridian? What about the technique to condense the Divine Body?

Basically, if they were to agree to his terms, they would have agreed to be part of Fang Yuan's team.

However, these 3 Wu Zongs were already mentally prepared. They only hesitated a while before exclaiming. "10 years is too little!"

To those who were in desolation at the fact that being a Wu Zong was a dead end, they would be willing to do anything to find the path after Wu Zong.

Forget about the 10-year agreement. Even if they were made to become slaves for a hundred years, they might even agree.

"Alright!"

Fang Yuan let out an expression of joy before going up to help them up. "From now on, all 3 of you will swear your loyalty to the Secluded Country. We are all one family now, so let's do away with the formalities!"

He could be direct and straightforward towards other people, but

since he was facing his own capable subordinates, there was no need to.

By treating them with respect and dignity, the three Wu Zongs were inspired, and the initial unwillingness and resistance to the agreement became lessened.

Compared to the joyous happenings in the Xia Country's tent, the Wu Country's tent was filled with an atmosphere of sorrow.

Looking at the two stretchers draped in white clothes stained with blood, Wu Qiankun's face was flushed. Forcefully, he drew his sword and sliced a wooden pillar next to him. "Xia Country! Fang Yuan! Bullies! I will take my revenge one day!"

It was indeed a humiliation for both his trustful aides to be killed.

It was further humiliation for him to give up his piece of land and be demoted from the appointment of alliance leader.

However, the most infuriating for Wu Qiankun was the fact that his life was determined by someone else.

In the history of Wu Country, there were records of 'Wu People causing political revolt' and 'illegal usage of spiritual spells', which served as warnings to the younger generation. However, these would surely not leave as deep an impression as what had happened this time.

After releasing his anger, Wu Qiankun calmed down and took in a deep breath. "Pass the order down... For our entire army to temporarily... listen to the orders of Xia Country!"

After finishing his sentence, he seemed to have lost all his strength and was on the brink of collapsing onto the floor. "Get lost!"

The bodyguards and servants around were longing to leave all along. With his command, they were secretly in joy as they hurriedly made their way out, and even so, they were still hoping to run faster.

"Phew phew..."

Wu Qiankun was breathing heavily. After half a day, he finally looked at a corner.

There was a man in black there. Nobody knew when he had arrived, and he looked as if he was waiting for someone. He was well camouflaged and could not be easily spotted.

"Black Ice!"

Wu Qiankun stood up with a look of determination. "Based on our capabilities, would it be possible to kill Fang Yuan by setting up traps?"

"That will be difficult!"

Black Ice's voice was hoarse like an owl. "We only have limited recordings regarding Elemental Opening Realm spiritual knights in the royal family's secret collection. Furthermore, these recordings are about spiritual knights, not Wu Zongs..."

"How did our ancestors deal with the Elemental Opening Realm spiritual knights in the past?"

Wu Qiankun's eyes glittered.

"They either establish good relations with them or hide from them... Only a small handful of talented people would be able to achieve a breakthrough to the Elemental Opening Realm. To them, this place is only a small pond. They would rather head towards the Da Qian empire to search for the path ahead..."

Black Ice sounded confident as if he had seen all of these himself.

"Then the only way is to tolerate them!"

Wu Qiankun bit his lip, revealing some blood.

As he thought about Fang Yuan's age, he felt hopeless. If Fang Yuan decided to stay in the region forever, then even his own grandsons might not be able to live long enough to outlast Fang Yuan.

"Based on how he managed to achieve a breakthrough in the Elemental Opening Realm at 20 proves that his potential is limitless! However, the more worrying part would be the fact that he had managed to discover the path after Wu Zong!"

Black Ice's explanation was straightforward. "How many people in the world train in martial arts? I'm afraid the number of people pursuing spiritual techniques is less than a thousandth of it! Imagine if the sheer number of martial artists would come together and combine forces..."

"Meridian Opening..."

Wu Qiankun mumbled on these two words, which had the potential to drive the entire mainland crazy. With a helpless smile, he thought of General Fei Long. "That's right... All highly skilled martial artist would not be able to resist this temptation."

...

On the second day, 30,000 troops were formed up as they marched towards the Dragon City, the capital of Yuan Country.

The continuous reports were coming in, making Fang Yuan able to understand much more.

"Eh?"

As he sat in a carriage with Xie Lingyun serving him at one side, he casually took a piece of a report to read, and his eyebrow began to twitch. "Purple Dream Princess?"

"This lady is the prettiest of all in the plains, the princess of Sunset Division! Master, are you interested in her?"

Xie Lingyun teased him, but in her tone was a hint of jealousy.

"Haha... I am only interested in her as she is the key person involved in the death of the Yuan King... A village of pretty ladies would be the downfall of any hero. This saying is very true, hehe! He didn't die in vain!"

Fang Yuan casually threw the report aside and scoffed.

Suddenly, he thought of the late King of the plains, Temujin. His death was unexplained, and this sent a chill down Fang Yuan's spine.

Whoever who succeeded would always pay less attention to themselves. They would die in the most uneventful way.

Even the most prestigious emperor was not spared. As long as he was human, any natural disasters or accidents could still kill him and wipe out the accomplishments he had in his life!

'Since I am no longer mortal, I will not make their mistakes. However, I still need to be cautious!'

In order to successfully explore the world and embark on the journey towards eternal life, one had to have a clear mind. Fang Yuan was jolted and woke up, and he reminded himself that he must not become proud of his achievement in taking over the entire mainland, or that would lead to his downfall.

"The question is... Where did Purple Dream Princess end up afterwards?!"

He posed a question.

"She might have been diced into pieces by the Golden Wolves Guards!"

Xie Lingyun bit her lip. It was obvious that she was not optimistic about Purple Dream Princesses' survival.

"If that is true, they would publicly announce it. Looking at the situation in Yuan Country, where the First Prince is gathering his military power as he readies himself to pit against the other princes, they would surely announce the outcome of Purple Dream Princess if that really happened!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin.

"Master, what you mean is..."

Xie Lingyun blinked her eyes as though she was in a daze.

'The expressions revealed subconsciously are always the most moving!'

Fang Yuan sighed in his heart and continued. "That Purple Dream... She is not simple! She might still be alive! After all, if it was a plan for revenge, even though the King is dead, the few princes are still alive!"

"Then what should we do?"

Xie Lingyun appeared serious. "Should we support one of the princes?"

"Haha, there is only one spot for king! How is this worth it!"

Fang Yuan laughed and appeared unpredictable.

....

Outside the Dragon City, there was blood everywhere.

Two troops of soldiers were fighting, and the horses were neighing loudly. Arrows flew around and the entire plains were covered in a hue of blood.

After the day has ended, both sides retreated. The Eighth Prince, Ge Ritu appeared vexed as he listened to his subordinate's report. "Damn! Why is the casualty rate so high?"

"The First Prince Ba Tu has taken over Dragon City. Second Prince A Guda took the opportunity to bribe and take over the King's personal soldiers. The other princes have the support of their own divisions. If we stayed in Dragon City, Ba Tu would never have the chance to take it over!"

Zhuo Li Getu reported in a serious tone.

The sudden changes in the city were too quick for Eighth Prince to react. He was caught off guard. When he returned, it was already too late.

Not just that, but by being the youngest prince, the other princes were jealous of him, and the situation was not desirable.

"Damn! Since Father is now dead, we should follow the rules and gather the leaders of our people to recommend the heir!"

Ge Ritu exclaimed helplessly.

The late king was an accomplished one, and his children were all remarkable.

First Prince Ba Tu was valiant and skilled in war. Second Prince A Guda was a highly skilled strategist. As the youngest among all the princes, Ge Ritu was the most average, and could only rely on the tradition to fight for the throne.

"Report!"

A calvary sped towards Ge Ritu and a soldier dismounted from the horse before kneeling down. "News from those behind has it that the people of the South have ended the conference. They have decided on a new alliance leader!"

"Hmph!"

Ge Ritu scoffed and knew that this was not the right time to be calculative about this. "Who did they recommend? The Country Governor of Wu Country?"

"No! It's the king of Xia Country! As of now, the countries have not returned. Instead, they have come together and are now in the plains. 30,000 soldiers are now coming our way towards the Dragon City!"

"What audacity!"

Ge Ritu's hands became pale, as he gripped on to the horse whip.

"If you give me 30,000, no! 20,000 soldiers, I can wipe out their army of 30,000 in the plains! When did the weak people of the South have the guts to invade his piece of land which the heavens have given to us?"

"Eighth Prince, you need to calm down!"

At this point, Zhuo Li Getu stood out.

His status was different. Not only was he the strongest warrior of Yuan Country, he was the mentor assigned by the king to guide Ge Ritu. Hearing him speak, Ge Ritu immediately quietened.

"With unity comes strength. Right now, we only have 10,000 troops. Taking into account the relentless invasions and disturbance from the other princes, this is not the time to start a war with the people from the South!"

Zhuo Li Getu calmly reasoned.

"Your intention is to... negotiate peace?"

Ge Ritu looked at his own mentor with a cold look.

"The people from the South are like a herd of sheep. Even with a lion as a leader, they are still weak. As long as we have some time, we can invade towards the South in the future! A temporary agreement will not mean much!"

Zhuo Li Getu casually commented, as though the agreement would worth nothing.

Chapter 187: White Robes

Since the first inhabitants of Yuan Country from the grass plains, they were sceptical.

They settled down in areas with vegetation and water sources, and there were only a few large cities in the entire region.

As Fang Yuan led the countries towards Dragon City, they did not encounter many locals on their way, and therefore there was little resistance.

Of course, as he got closer to Dragon City, there were obstacles in his way.

In front of Fang Yuan were rows and rows of calvaries. Although they appeared disorganised, they still seemed powerful. Every one of them looked fierce, and the horses were all strong ones with red eyes and an occasional puff of visible air from their mouths. A row of white teeth was revealed as the horses snarled.

"Master, I have the details!"

As the soldiers were waiting for their command, Xie Lingyun rushed over to Fang Yuan's side on a horse. "What we see in front of us is the Golden Sheep Division and Louqie Division. There are the armies of the Third and Fourth Prince! Should we send someone to talk to them?"

"That won't be necessary. Send all the country governors here!"

Fang Yuan was considered to have unofficial control over the country governors. He, as a single person, was able to decide their life and death. Therefore, when the command was given, no one dared to disobey.

No long later, Wu Qiankun and company arrived before him.

"The huge grass plains of Yuan Country is a big problem for us. I am useless, yet I want to solve this problem!"

Fang Yuan commanded. "Order all the calvaries to gather and follow me as we break their formation!"

"Hold on, should we hold talks with them?"

Wu Qiankun appeared to be confused.

On one hand, he hoped that Fang Yuan would die from rushing into their formation.

On the other hand, seeing the internal conflict in Yuan Country made him feel that he was so close to success, and therefore felt a little regretful.

In the end, the thought of letting Fang Yuan fall into their trap won over his head.

"There's no need! They are not afraid of us! If we do not defeat them, there will be no ground for negotiations!"

Without wearing an armour, Fang Yuan immediately gathered his 5,000 strong calvary troops and began to charge.

"No one can match us!"

Draped in white robes, Fang Yuan rode a white horse and came to the front of the formation with much elegance.

A white horse was not auspicious! This was because, in the ancient times, many horses were brown or black, and riding a white horse would attract too much attention. Furthermore, it could be easily picked up by firepower. Needless to say, Fang Yuan did not care about all these.

"Charge!"

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

"Kill!"

Even though the attack was planned in a rush, Fang Yuan's spirit and passion were infectious, and all of them felt the vigour to

fight.

"Calvaries from the people of the South?"

On the opposite camp, both princes were enraged as the people of the South did not hold their line of defence even after seeing their own troops. "Destroy them!"

"Charge!"

The cavalry units on the grass plains were shouting as they made their horses sprint.

Their battle horses were much taller than the horses from the South and were also ferocious.

Rumour had it that on the grass plains of the Yuan territory, there was a Heavenly Horse. It came from the Nine Heavens and was the leader of all spiritual beasts.

The Heavenly Horse would not live with the normal horses, and would only be found in perilous areas.

Every time when shepherds had managed to track the whereabouts of the Heavenly Horse, they would let out the most obedient and beautiful female horse into the mountains and valleys.

Among 10 of these female horses, there would be at least one that came back pregnant, carrying the descendant of the Heavenly Horse.

After many generations of mating, this became the standard for battle horses on the grass plains.

Even though they only had a hint of the Heavenly Horse's genes, they were still very much stronger than normal horses. If martial artists with inner force were to form a human wall, these horses would still be able to break through it easily.

The two lines of calvaries became spearheads as they approached each other.

"Bang!"

"Bang bang!"

Finally, after a few collisions, a few soldiers were flung at each other, becoming a pile of bloodied corpses.

"Fire!"

The people of the Yuan Country grew up on horsebacks. Their archery skills were commendable and could even shoot at full power from close range.

"Whoosh whoosh!"

Arrows fell like rain and landed on Fang Yuan. However, they could not even penetrate the energy field around him as they were deflected to the ground.

"Die!"

His eyes flashed with anger. As he waved his hands, the heads from two horses rolled onto the ground.

'Their too weak! Even after my discreet hypnosis, they can only produce such standards!'

Fang Yuan looked behind him. Many cavalry units were slashing their spears around as they were engaged in fierce fights with the cavalry units from the grass plains. It was a pity that it was an ugly sight to behold, for most in most of the fights, two soldiers were required to fend off one soldier from the Yuan Country. They were useless beyond hope.

'After all, they are not professionals. Furthermore, we have only just combined forces, and the soldiers do not know their Thousand-trooped Commanders well as the Thousand-trooped Commanders know their soldiers. Therefore, I should not fault them!'

'Luckily, my plan did not require any dependency on them!'

Looking at a direction, Fang Yuan leapt off his horse's back.

"Whoosh!"

His Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique was used to the maximum, and the raining arrows could do nothing to slow him down. From the naked eye, he had transformed into a white shadow. After a few leaps, he had already arrived in front of the Yuan Country's Thousand-trooped Commander who was giving orders.

"Kill!"

This person's skin was like metal as it was extremely reflective. Seeing Fang Yuan approaching him, he revealed a cunning smile and leapt backwards, in the meantime returning a few slashes from his broad knife.

"Protect the Thousand-trooped Commander!"

From the surroundings, many cavalry units rushed towards Fang Yuan. All of them were martial artists in the 4 Heavenly Gates, and this Thousand-trooped Commander was even stronger, with a cultivation at the peak of the 12th Gate.

His retreat and the narrowing of the circle around Fang Yuan happened within seconds. However, they all seemed to be well versed in the tactic, as though they had practised it for a thousand times before. It was obvious that this was a tactic they had prepared for this type of war.

After all, in this world, there was the existence of Wu Zongs and spiritual knights! War had to adapt to this fact.

"Useless!"

Fang Yuan exclaimed as his speed suddenly increased. He managed to escape the circle and came in front of the Thousand-trooped Commander. With his finger, he folded and broke the knife, and at the same time struck his forehead.

"Peng!"

The Thousand-trooped Commander's head exploded like a

watermelon, and his corpse fell to the ground.

The 8 soldiers, who made up the circle, froze. At that moment, their eyes turned red with fury. "Die!!!"

Yuan Country was strict in training their soldiers. If their Thousand-trooped Commander were to die, all of them had to die as well, including their family members.

At this point, there were already dead in the eyes of their country. The only way for them to have a chance at survival was to kill Fang Yuan in order to use merit to redeem themselves. Therefore, all of them rushed towards Fang Yuan without any regard for their lives.

"Using a grasshopper's arm to block an oncoming car!"

Fang Yuan stretched his arm out. As the swords came in contact with his arm, they immediately became scrap metal and flew backwards quickly.

"Ping! Ping!"

On the spot, these 8 soldiers became like a hornet's nest; their bodies had an uncountable number of wounds as blood oozed out from every single wound.

All of this happened in a matter of seconds; the death of the Thousand-trooped Commander and the death of the 8 soldiers. The remaining thousands of soldiers under his charge began to panic.

In the armed forces of the Yuan Country, a Ten-trooped Commander would be in charge of 10 men. A Hundred-trooped Commander would have to lead 100 men. Therefore, a Thousand-trooped Commander was the leader of a thousand soldiers! He was indeed a high ranking leader, and his death meant that the command post was figuratively crippled.

Fang Yuan did not slow down. Snatching another horse, he rushed towards the 20,000-men strong troop.

"Kill him!"

Kill him!"

The people of Yuan Country were in a mess. Among the 1,000 soldiers and 10,000 horses, a white dot was rushing through, as Fang Yuan continued to kill a few other Thousand-trooped Commanders. There was no one who could stop him.

"Generals, don't hide, otherwise your troops will not dare to face the white robes! Haha..."

On the opposite, Wu Qiankun looked at the white shadow as it pounced around within the Yuan Country soldiers. Hearing the cheers from the sidelines, he was dumbfounded together with the other country governors.

"This is the time to strike. What are you all waiting for?"

Xie Lingyun looked at the one-man army as it caused disruption to the enemy, and her eyes glittered. "Gather all our troops and attack! Attack!"

"Sound the drums and attack!"

The king of Xia Country gave the command.

Wu Qiankun had initially hoped that Fang Yuan would fall into the trap of the enemy. However, he had lost all hope as he witnessed the scene in front of him. He had decided to be more respectful to Fang Yuan.

"Attack!"

As the 20,000-men strong army exclaimed, their voices were rumbling. Behind the inspired calvaries, they started to invade as well.

...

"Pu!"

Blood splattered as another Thousand-trooped Commander fell

to the floor, with disbelief on his face.

"This should be the seventh!"

Fang Yuan casually tossed the corpse away. The path in front of him was now clear, and he could see two men dressed in bright robes running away.

"You cannot run!"

As he took in a deep breath, the glow of the spiritual meridian appeared and surrounded his body.

"Protect the prince!"

A few shamans leapt out as they chanted numerous evil incantations on him.

A few Wu Zongs appeared as well as they attempted to corner him.

"Do you think you can stop me?"

As the few evil incantations landed on his body, the flicker of the glow of the spiritual meridian immediately caused them to dissipate into thin air.

As he focused his strength on his claws, Fang Yuan struck them out. "Giant Eagle Claw!"

"Whoosh!"

As his elemental force gathered, they seemed physically real to the touch as Fang Yuan used it to press the few Wu Zongs; they were pressed into a bloody mess!

This was the violent power of suppression from someone with the Third Elemental Force!

"You... You are not human, but Qiutege! Qiutege!!!"

Seeing their bodyguards being minced effortlessly by Fang Yuan, they quickened their pace and ran even faster than a horse! Once they were caught, they were already frightened to the point that

their pants were wet.

One of them was older and looked like Ge Ritu; he was the one who pointed at Fang Yuan and screamed.

Qiutege meant an evil demon in the language of Yuan Country.

Even though they knew the existence of cultivation, they still treated such a powerful and unreasonable person as an evil demon!

"Both of you are useless! Wait, I could use both of you!"

Fang Yuan grabbed the both of them and snatched a spiritual horse over for himself. Using both of them as a shield, how would their own soldiers dare to fire their arrows? With this, he was able to rush back to his own troops.

"Pa! Pa!"

Casually, he flung the weak princes to Xie Lingyun. "These two are high-status slaves. Let them have a taste of the cavalries from the grass plains! If that is not possible, we can still initiate a trade with the other princes. Let's see how much they will be willing to pay for the both of them!"

"Master..."

Xie Lingyun's mouth was wide open, but not a word came out.

The other Wu Zongs looked at him in fear and were all dripping sweat.

To capture their leaders among thousands of soldiers!

They didn't dare to think that such a thing would happen. Once they were surrounded by equally skilled martial artists, and with the combined attack from the enemy, they would surely be captured.

However, Fang Yuan had made history today!

Witnessing this, Wu Qiankun felt even more hopeless. Facing such an opponent, even if he had thousands of soldiers, a great

strategy, it would still be useless! Fang Yuan was a person who would not waste time, and would charge straight into the formation to take down the general, and finally the leader!

It was a simple plan which made use of brute force, but it was extremely effective!

From then on, a man dressed in white robes on a white horse would forever be a nightmare to the soldiers on the grass plains.

Chapter 188: Dragon City

On the vast plains, from a distance, there was a majestic view of a city.

That was the capital of Yuan Country, Dragon City.

As one of the few buildings and being the largest city of Yuan Country, it was the country's headquarters, and it was the place people put their trust in and faith in.

At this point in time, an army of the people from the South had finally arrived at the weakness of Yuan Country.

"Queen, we hope that you would convince him to become allies with our princes. It's a win-win situation!"

Within the tent, a Yuan Country representative was smiling as he was being dismissed.

"This is... the third one for today right?"

Xie Lingyun rubbed her forehead. As much as she felt tired, she also felt pleased.

From the destruction of the two princes armies and Fang Yuan having the nickname of Qiutege in the grass plains, to the peaceful journey from then onwards, the other princes had learnt from Third and Fourth Prince's mistakes and had sent out messengers to show their good intentions.

"Not just Second Prince A Guda and Eighth Prince Ge Ritu, but even the First Prince Ba Tu had come forth. All of them were humble, and we have finally gotten back at them on behalf of the other small countries. Master, what you have said is indeed true! Even if we want to negotiate, we have to defeat and force them into submission first!"

The previous victory was the crucial event that enabled them to choose in peace which prince they want to support!

"Master, who would you want to support?"

Xie Lingyun looked at Fang Yuan's tent, perplexed.

...

However, Fang Yuan was no longer in his tent.

"The Dragon City is indeed different from the other cities. It has a different vibe to it!"

With his skills and guts, he had managed to secretly infiltrate the capital of Yuan Country.

The city walls and the guards who were on continuous patrol were all a joke to him.

"I'm guessing that the current owner of Dragon City is Ba Tu?"

As he walked towards the city square, his eyes were filled with curiosity. "To resort to such a means to get to the throne! He must be doing all that he can, what a pity!"

Even with the possession of Dragon City, Ba Tu had the weakest foundation among all the princes.

"I've heard that since Ba Tu has the reputation of the son that led to the death of his father, many of his own people dislike him. What a poor thing..."

Looking at the empty streets, Fang Yuan let out a gentle sigh.

Around him, many guards were patrolling. However, they were like blind men and ignored Fang Yuan's existence.

The first part of the cultivation to be a dream master was to be 'illusionary'. Even if these warriors had obtained inner force, they would still not be able to see or hear Fang Yuan.

'With the cultivation of a dream master, I wouldn't have to be afraid of people combining forces and attacking me. Opening meridians after Wu Zong would allow me to take out the leader among thousands of soldiers! With both of these together, I am

invincible! In this region, whoever I want to kill will die, even if it's the king of Yuan Country or the governor of Xia Country!'

As he thought to himself, he arrived at the palace of Yuan Country.

This palace was majestic. However, it was lacking in a certain vibe.

Without saying anything, a layer of bewildering fog covered himself as he entered the palace.

In the Royal Study.

"Jerk! Why are Yehe Division and Nayan Division not listening to my orders? I want to send troops over and destroy them!"

In a moment, everyone could feel the wrath of Ba Tu.

As the eldest son of the king, his facial features were rather similar to the late king. He had a brute appearance and was the classic example of a boy who grew up in the grass plains.

After letting out his anger, he began to slowly calm down. All that was left in his heart was a sense of helplessness.

"The woman... Have we found her?"

Ba Tu was filled with regret.

He recalled the first time he set eyes on that woman's beauty. He had to control his own urges and overcome his greed before he could make the decision to give her to his father.

This was purely his act of loyalty, and he had no evil intentions.

"Who would've known that that woman would... that woman would... She isn't human! She's a devil, with the heart of a fox, the eyes of a snake, the teeth of a wolf and the poison of a scorpion..."

Thinking about it, Ba Tu felt a little fortunate.

If the woman were to throw herself to him, then he would be the one dead.

'No one... no one can resist that smile of hers!'

Thinking about her sweet smile, Ba Tu quickly shook his head vigorously as though he wanted to erase all these memories of her.

"That woman... We have no clue about her whereabouts since that day!"

In front of Ba Tu was a shaman who knelt down as he reported. He sounded helpless.

"She must still be around, in the Dragon City, within the palace walls!"

Although Ba Tu was a valiant warrior, he was just a frantic person with no clarity of thought. His eyes were bloodshot, and he paced up and down as his heart was filled with uneasiness.

"Don't worry prince. With my protection, that evil woman will not come in. Not just her, but anyone else before. Nobody can come in here without me noticing!"

The shaman replied, brimming with confidence.

"Before? Does that mean that there is such a person able to do that now? Is it the demonic person from the South?"

Ba Tu mumbled.

"That Fang Yuan is indeed a threat to the grass plains. However, there is nothing to be worried about, my prince. All of us will swear to protect the royal family with our lives!"

"My two brothers might have agreed to Fang Yuan's conditions, and I have no idea what they are! Hmph..."

Ba Tu was not the average person. He had strong foundations, and slowly, he began to calm down. "I'll send a messenger. This is to establish good relations with the people from the South. Before this internal conflict is over, it is not wise to have another enemy. Since they have not replied us, you shall look for them in a while. Tell them that if they are willing to work for me, they will get

honour and everything else!"

"Yes, sir! You are the eagle, flying high in the sky, and we are your hunting dogs!"

The shaman replied respectfully.

"Don't foolishly think that that is my intention. But if I don't do this, how can we concentrate our forces and defeat A Guda and Ge Ritu?"

A cunning look flashed on Ba Tu's face, like a wolf. "After I have taken over the entire grass plains, we will head South to plunder from them. Otherwise, how would we be able to withstand the extreme cold weather?"

"Prince, that is a wonderful plan!"

The shaman praised Ba Tu, but suddenly, his expression changed as he looked out of the window. "Who's there? Who's there?"

"Me!"

Fang Yuan revealed himself as he walked in with big steps. With a mocking tone, he asked, "You're Ba Tu? I'm here now! You can lay out your conditions!"

"What audacity!"

Seeing a stranger walk in out of a sudden, Ba Tu subconsciously grabbed the knife on his waist, and his expression changed. "This is not right... You're..."

There was only one such person who had the ability to traverse within the boundaries of the palace undetected.

The white-robed Qiutege - Fang Yuan!

"You're smart!"

Ba Tu quickly composed himself, and Fang Yuan nodded his head.

With such a composure, Ba Tu was not the average reckless

person.

"I have already sealed this place up. No matter how loudly you may shout, no one would be able to hear you!"

Fang Yuan slowly walked towards him.

"Fang Yuan, what is your motive for coming here?"

Just thinking about this made Ba Tu anxious.

"I'm only here to warn you that I have the ability to destroy everything!"

Fang Yuan replied without any reservations, and suddenly his silhouette flickered.

"Not good!"

The shaman was in shock. With a wave of the spiritual drum in his hand, a blood-red glow slowly spread across the room.

"You're a mere firefly, and yet you dare to fight with the moon's glow?!"

Facing him, Fang Yuan smiled. The spiritual meridian on his body appeared as a huge force disabled the shaman's spiritual spell. The Elemental Gathering Realm shaman exclaimed as a hole broke through one side of the spiritual drum. He was grieving beyond words.

"Rumble!"

As the blood-red glow dissipated, Fang Yuan came to Ba Tu. Using his fingers, he flicked his knife away and grabbed him by his neck like he was carrying a helpless chick.

"I'm here to warn you that if I decide to take your life, you cannot escape from me!"

Fang Yuan moved closer to him. "I'm prepared to sign the alliance agreement with you. If you ever try to break the agreement, think about this moment!"

"I... understand!"

Ba Tu's face became purple as he struggled to reply.

The pressure of suffocation and death started to distort his consciousness.

"That's good!"

Fang Yuan released his grip, and Ba Tu quickly used his hands to support his own neck. With much desperation, he greedily gulped in breaths of fresh air, and his tears almost flowed out.

Never had he thought that being able to breathe normally was such a privilege.

Seeing how Ba Tu suffered, he knew that he had set a deep impression in him. With a laughter, Fang Yuan asked. "About that Purple Dream Princess... where did she come from? Does she have anything with her? Bring me to her!"

"You... go!"

Ba Tu waved his hand.

The shaman was in shock, and he bowed respectfully to Fang Yuan. "Our honourable guest from the South, follow me!"

As Fang Yuan's silhouette slowly disappeared, Ba Tu's face turned green...

...

"To think about it, if the dream-building technique was not that complicated, I wouldn't need to put in so much effort?"

Fang Yuan followed the shaman and smoothly walked through the palace, with a tinge of regret.

The final stage of the dream-building technique would allow the dream master to alter old memories and confuse illusions with reality. The effects would be unthinkable.

But the human mind and memories are too complicated! To alter

them would be too troublesome, and it was almost impossible to perform it on such a leader - it would take up too much time.

Furthermore, even though they might not be cultivators themselves, these leaders would still have highly-skilled bodyguards. They could detect abnormalities and react accordingly. They could even be replaced if anything happened to them!

Therefore, to Fang Yuan, it would be a waste of time trying to access the dreams of these servants and bodyguards! Even for tactics which target to take down the leader, the main point would be only to induce fear.

If he had to reach this stage, Fang Yuan had to be mentally prepared to become enemies with the whole world.

"We're here. This was where Purple Dream Princess once stayed..."

Through a garden, past a few corridors, the shaman brought Fang Yuan to a majestic tent. "The tents and equipment are directly brought over from the Sunset Division!"

"Mmm!"

Fang Yuan was not afraid that the shaman might have anything up his sleeves, and walked right in.

The decor of the interior of the tent was normal. The only thing which caught his attention was a crystal mirror which was glittering.

Using his magical energy, he detected a familiar type of spiritual aura.

Chapter 189: Purple Dream

The palace of Yuan Country was majestic. With the mixtures of courts and tents, the kings from the other country would be at a loss if they saw all of these.

At this point in time, Fang Yuan was in one of the tents.

Using his magical energy, he could sense everything in the tent. His nose picked up a hint of mild fragrance as he imagined an image of a stunning lady.

Even though her face was covered, Fang Yuan could still figure out her looks.

"A beauty indeed, but..."

There was a suspicious look on his face. "This spiritual aura... dream master? No! Just similar!"

"Ha!"

Fang Yuan had a serious look on his face. Suddenly, his hands moved and rays of spiritual glow seeped out of the tent.

The shaman was standing respectfully at one side. He knew that this sorcerer from the South was trying to trace the spiritual aura of the murderer, and shook his head silently.

Looking at Yuan Country's capabilities, how many shamans would they have serving them?

The death of the king and the disappearance of Purple Dream led many to come here and loot their valuables.

However, be it fierce hunters or those skilled in spiritual techniques, none of them had their way. Even the many spiritual knights who came from the South had no way of dealing with the shamans here.

This Qiutege from the South was rumoured to have discovered the path after Wu Zong, and was known by many as the gifted one.

However, who knew if he even possessed any spiritual techniques?

The next moment left him in shock.

A layer of fog appeared within the tent, and a hint of purple glow was visible in it.

As the colours mixed, the fog moved towards the crystal mirror, and the purple hue thickened.

'Indeed a tactic of a dream master, but why does it not convince me...'

With the wave of his sleeves, the purple glow dissipated and Fang Yuan remained silent.

"Sir?"

The shaman had waited for quite a while before going up to him.

"Take your leave, there's no need to follow me!"

"Whoosh!"

Only a shadow of Fang Yuan was left, and his words travelled from afar. It was evident that he had left a long time ago.

Seeing this, the shaman turned pale.

...

On the streets.

Looking at the purple fog floating in front of him, Fang Yuan followed closely as it seemed to be heading in a certain direction.

"Heh... This method of stalking her spiritual aura is actually quite useful!"

He had learnt this spiritual technique while he was the Eagle Lieutenant in Yang Fan's dream. Back then, he used his status to read up on spiritual techniques like such from the government building. This technique was once frequently used by thieves and pirates in the past.

Executing it made him realise that it was rather powerful.

The Purple Dream Princess which left many shamans and warriors from the Yuan Country helpless immediately revealed her tracks.

"It takes a lot of courage for her to still remain in Dragon City!"

Following the spiritual sign, Fang Yuan arrived at large household. After walking one round around it, he smiled to himself before barging in.

"How dare you! Don't you know that this is Ye Lu Buhua's household?"

A person who seemed to be the housekeeper walked out with a whip in his hand. As he saw Fang Yuan, he was shocked. "A person from the South?"

"Get lost!"

Without looking, Fang Yuan waved his sleeves and this person rolled on the floor.

"Are you trying to kill me?"

"How dare you!"

After a few shouts, a few others rushed out with their bows and they looked fierce.

After the commotion, the soldiers on patrol in the streets hurried here and surrounded the house.

"All of you are not her!"

Fang Yuan scanned his surroundings. With the ball of purple fog in his hand, he barged into the backyard.

"Whoosh whoosh!"

The arrows fell like raindrops, but none of them managed to even touch Fang Yuan.

Under the shock of many, Fang Yuan lightly leapt up and flipped

over the wall to arrive at the backyard.

This created chaos and many ladies began to scream.

Many wives screamed as they ran away, but they all seemed normal. Fang Yuan shook his head in disappointment.

"All of you are still not her!"

He looked around and identified a suspicious spot.

"Come out!"

With the strike of his palm, the wooden window broke into pieces and flew everywhere.

"How dare you! Who are you? How dare you intrude my house?"

A general walked out of the room. His eyes were ferocious, and behind him was a 20-year old gracious looking lady.

"Purple Dream Princess, stop hiding!"

Chuckling, Fang Yuan released the ball of purple fog. It exploded and transfigured into many small snakes, which caused the lady to scream.

"Hiss hiss!"

The small snakes swerved, but instead, they rushed towards the general.

"Eh..."

The general let out a gentle sigh, but this time, his voice was different. It was charming and sweet, but when matched with his appearance, it was creepy.

"This is a good place to hide. Why do you want to reveal my identity?"

A lady's voice came out of the general's mouth, like a scene straight out from a nightmare. The lady next to Fang Yuan had mixed feelings of embarrassment and anger before she fainted on the spot.

"You're not from Yuan Country!"

The general, who seemed to have taken over the identity of Ye Lu Buhua, examined Fang Yuan before concluding with much confidence.

"Purple Dream Princess!"

Fang Yuan's hair stood on its ends.

After all, a seven feet tall male suddenly took on the delicate actions of a lady, and just the sight of it would give anyone goosebumps. "Impressive Transfiguration Technique! Do I have the honour of seeing your real appearance?"

"You want to take a look at my real appearance?"

'Ye Lu Buhua' shook his head. With a clear and gentle voice, he replied. "This is simple! But why do you have to come now and disrupt my plans for revenge?"

It was obvious that this 'general' was an important figure in Dragon City, and should have a certain degree of influence.

At the crucial time for the princes to fight for the throne, creating trouble would hit all of them the hardest.

"Ah!"

"General?"

"No, he's not the general, but a demonic woman!"

...

The soldiers who were witnessing the scene finally realised what was happening, and they were all creeped out.

Had their general been swapped out? This was something that would only happen in their dreams!

"This Transfiguration Technique is nothing..."

Purple Dream Princess let out a soft sigh. "The difficult part was learning his expression, habits and actions! All thanks to you, my

effort is now wasted! How do you intend to compensate me?"

"If this is your true attitude, then I might consider surrendering, but now..."

Fang Yuan snickered.

"Hehe... I know that you have other thoughts in your mind. You won't let me off without seeing my face!"

Purple Dream Princess smiled, and suddenly she peeled her skin off.

A white glow flashed past!

An unusual thing happened.

She peeled off the entire face of Ye Lu Buhua, including his neck, chest, legs and shirt... After the entirety of it was peeled off, it seemed as though she was simply wearing a Ye Lu Buhua robe.

After the robe had been peeled off, it glowed and became a piece of thin white paper; on it was an image of Ye Lu Buhua's. The paper floated to the ground.

A beautiful lady with glittering eyes and a mesmerising smile stood at the same spot. She was the ultimate beauty!

"I've heard of the beauty from the North. When you look at the soldiers, they will forget about their duties, if you look at the king, he will forget about the country... Purple Dream, oh Purple Dream! Indeed a true beauty, you are as mesmerizing as a dream!"

Fang Yuan clapped his hands and sighed.

Even Fang Yuan was dazed for a moment. The soldiers around were all at lost.

"You're the first one to be able to awaken from my mesmerizing looks!"

Purple Dream's stunning eyebrows frowned. "You give me a different vibe as compared to other men, I don't want to..."

While she was in the skin of Ye Lu Buhua, it was disgusting to see her graceful actions.

But now, every action she made reaffirmed her as an alluring beauty. Her natural beauty was her best weapon!

"What do you not want to do?"

Fang Yuan was a little distracted by her and took a step forward.

"Don't want to ... Kill you just like that!"

As she spoke, her voice was so sweet that it felt as though she wanted to bring him into a sweet dream.

"Whoosh!"

At the same time, her body whizzed and within a split second, she appeared in front of Fang Yuan! She stretched her 5 fingers towards him.

Her fingers were long, white, smooth and comparable to white jade.

However, they became deadly claws and her nails sliced through the air.

Even if Fang Yuan was a new Wu Zong, he would still be pierced by the deadly claws of hers!

But Fang Yuan was no longer a new Wu Zong.

How could he compare to what he was before?

"Why would such a beauty like you want to be a thief!"

Suddenly, Purple Dream Princess's expression changed as she felt her wrist being locked up by what felt like metal cuffs; she could not move a single bit.

"You... Let me go!"

She blushed, albeit in anger, but anyone who saw her would likely listen to her.

"Indeed an illusionary spell!"

Fang Yuan smiled with confidence. "Stop trying so hard. These illusions are useless to me! Don't worry, I won't kill you, and I won't hand you over to Yuan Country as well. I am only curious about you!"

"You... You are..."

However, Purple Dream's expression became weird all of a sudden.

It was as though she was experiencing fear, shock and curiosity all at once... Everything flashed through in her eyes, but suddenly her eyes had a determined look. "Go!"

"Weng!"

Spiritual inscriptions began to appear all over her body like purple flowers blooming. All of a sudden, there was an explosion.

"This is... a spiritual array? No! You are..."

Fang Yuan was astonished and readily released his grip on her before retreating out.

"Rumble!"

Only after leaving the entire household did he turn his head around. All he saw was a purple streak of light shooting up towards the sky, sucking in the entire household of Ye Lu Buhua.

"Array?!"

He shook his head. "No... The most important is still her identity! Who would've guessed that she was a..."

Fang Yuan mumbled a few words. Looking at the increasingly chaotic Dragon City and the troops that were approaching, he quickly left.

He had a strong feeling that he would meet Purple Dream Princess again in the future.

Chapter 190: Splitting of Land

Ye Lu Buha's death was merely the beginning of the chaos in Dragon City.

It was nothing compared to what happened afterwards.

In a short span of a day, Fang Yuan had 'visited' the First Prince Ba Tu, Second Prince A Guda, Eighth Prince Geritu in succession. He also used the name of alliance leader to pressure them into joining the alliance.

Of course, if it was before all of this had happened, the people of the Yuan Country would not care about this, but in order to cooperate with the powerful Fang Yuan, even the fiercest lion would become an obedient cat.

Even the most delinquent Eighth Prince had to follow after the strongest warrior of Yuan Country, Zhuo Li Getu had lost to Fang Yuan after three moves. Without much say, they had to partake in the conference held by the king of Xia Country.

Outside the Dragon City.

Troops of soldiers from Yuan Country were moving, and Ba Tu was in the middle. There were a few warriors and shamans around him.

"Why not organise the conference within the city?"

He scoffed in dissatisfaction, but there was a hint of fear in his eyes.

Ba Tu was not afraid of Fang Yuan. If Fang Yuan wanted to kill him, there was nowhere he could hide!

He was fearful of his few brothers.

"Don't worry prince. The conference is held within the camp of the people from the South. I'll use my reputation as the strongest warrior in the world to ensure our safety!"

By his side was a shaman with a nose piercing. "With that master around, A Guda and Ge Ritu would not take the risk to try to kill you! Furthermore... If the conference was held in the Dragon City, your brothers might not be agreeable to it!"

Ba Tu smiled helplessly. He knew that if that happened, he might just set a trap to capture both A Guda and Ge Ritu, for it would be a rare opportunity to capture them.

"These people from the South cannot fight wars, but I'll have to admit that their architecture skills are not too bad! If there's a chance for us to go to the South in the future, remember to capture a few carpenters and architects to be our slaves!"

As they arrived at the campsite, there were a few tall platforms built on towers, and Ba Tu thought silently to himself.

"Lu lu!"

At a short distance away, there were two trails of sand dust approaching.

"It's the bugle of A Guda and Ge Ritu!"

With one look, Ba Tu appeared solemn.

As they came closer and closer, the atmosphere became increasingly tense.

The people from the South had already expected this to happen. With the opening of the campsite's gates, a few thousand troops flowed out. Under the command of Zhang Xia, Li Hanghu and Liu Shanchuang, they managed the situation to restore order.

"Hmph!"

Ge Retu leapt down from his horse, and Zhu Li Getu followed. This 'strongest' warrior of Yuan Country seemed to be a little pale as he coughed a few times. It was obvious that he was not in his best condition, and could only follow weakly behind Ge Ritu.

"Ba Tu! What a demon you are! You have been cursed by the

heavens and you are now guilty of murdering your own father. How dare you come here?"

Ge Ritu squinted his eyes and gave a cold look, as he softly called out, "Zhuo Li Getu..."

"Eighth Prince, I understand your intent..."

Zhuo Li Getu coughed before continuing. "From this distance, ignoring the fact that I might die, I can indeed kill Ba Tu. However, the people from the South would surely not let us off. This would only benefit your brother, A Guda!"

"I know, and that's why we have to exercise restraint!"

Ge Ritu gave a serious look as he walked up the platform. His expression changed once more.

He had expected to see the various kings sitting according to their allocated positions, but there were two unexpected people here!

"It's Third and Fourth Prince!"

Zhu Li Getu replied. "It seems that the news is true. With the 20,000-men strong army, both of them surrendered to the people from the South!"

"What humiliation! I will never forget this day!"

Ge Ritu clenched his fist.

As the three princes arrived, they made eye contact with the two princes who were already there and exchanged fierce looks with one another.

"Yuan Country and Wu Country have always been the pillar of strength in the conferences!"

As soon as everyone arrived, the king of Xia Country gave his speech which he had prepared. "... The death of the king of Yuan Country is a regret, but Yuan Country cannot be without a leader..."

"Hmph! Does the alliance leader have the intention to get involved in our internal affairs?"

Although he was the youngest, Ge Ritu was the first one unable to control himself and rebutted.

"All of you are heroes. How can I casually make the decision? However, the chaos in Yuan Country is ultimately not a good thing! Do I have the authority to make such a decision?"

Xie Lingyun stood up and smiled. "Although we only have 30,000 soldiers here, we have already sent out the signal. Soon enough, we would have a 100,000 more joining us from the boundaries of the grass plains!"

Hearing this, Ba Tu and A Guda looked at each other, feeling troubled.

If they manage to gather their troops, it would not be an easy fight.

However, Fang Yuan was clear that this was Xie Lingyun's over exaggeration. Even though he had the ability to manipulate every country governor and king, he would be fortunate enough if he had managed to gather 100,000 troops.

The sheer number was enough to strike fear in them.

Immediately, a few people from Yuan Country were at lost. "What do you all want to do?"

"We have said it before. To have peace in the grass plains, we need to come up with a plan that everyone is agreeable to!"

Fang Yuan remarked.

Although he was only wearing the robes of a country governor, his position was the highest without a doubt. Therefore, had the most right to talk.

Ba Tu and A Guda were lost for words. Finally, it was still Ge Ritu who stood out. "What do you all intend to do? Say it now!"

"Very well!"

The king of Xia Country clapped his hands. "All of you princes are heroes, and I dare not make the decision. What if everyone gets to be king to lead their own country? How does that sound?"

"What?"

This suggestion shocked everyone.

Ge Ritu was enraged and shocked at the same time. His words were stuck in his throat, and he could not say anything.

This was because he could see interest in the eyes of Ba Tu, A Guda and even the Third and Fourth Prince, and therefore was in desolation.

Since he used to be the crown prince of Yuan Country, he had looked at the problem from the king's perspective. Of course, he would find this arrangement unacceptable.

However, it was good news for the other princes.

Indeed, instead of trying to fight for a slim chance at being king, it was easier and more tempting to take the rewards now.

The reward was the most tempting to the princes with little hope of being king.

"That's right!"

Fang Yuan's voice spread. "This grass plains is huge! It is even possible to split this land up into 80 pieces if you like! By splitting it into 8 pieces, every prince can be their own king and start their own country!"

At this stage, his plans started to unfold.

Regardless of which prince would become the ultimate king of Yuan Country, they would still target the South!

Even if he destroyed Yuan Country, he would only get a few years of peace before a new country would rise again.

Therefore, the only solution would be to let the people of Yuan Country have internal conflicts and waste their time on each other.

"There are too many divisions in the grass plains, and it would be impractical to wipe them all out. We need your expertise, and therefore we will support this plan!"

He thought to himself silently.

Splitting up the huge Yuan Country and allowing the princes to fight among each other; helping the weak and taking down the strong; all of these are just there to let them waste time. Splitting them up would not give them the chance to gather their strength together.

This was a delicate operation and required the cooperation of the countries neighbouring the grass plains to support the plan, but Fang Yuan was willing to try it out.

Even if it were to fail, it would cost him nothing. What was there to fear about?

"How do we split the land, people, soldiers and horses?"

Ge Ritu asked.

"This is simple. Every matured prince would get 10,000 citizens, allocated based on the divisions in the land. As for the grass plains, I have split it up into 8 parts, come and decide for yourself who to get which!"

Fang Yuan ordered for a map to be brought up.

On the map was the area of Yuan Country. Although the grass plains were closer to the South, it was vast and fertile.

But now, it was casually split into 8 portions, and on all of the portions, there was a label.

Ba Tu, A Guda and Ge Ritu looked at one another.

It seemed that the people from the South had already prepared

for them to split up their country.

However, no one dared to make a decision and be the one guilty of splitting the country up, plus... How would they be convinced to settle for this without even trying to fight for the throne?

"Thank you for your kind intentions. Both of us will sign the alliance agreements!"

Third and Fourth prince, both who were already taken over, leapt out.

They had a slim chance to fight for the throne, to begin with. Now that their armies were defeated by Fang Yuan, they had huge losses. It would be a blessing in disguise for them to take this consolation prize.

'Disgusting... Both of you are the thieves among us!'

Witnessing this scene, Ge Ritu gritted his teeth and clenched his fists in anger.

"We will... accept this plan!"

Even so, it was only logical to agree to the agreement.

Tears rolled down his cheeks as soon as he had agreed to the plan.

...

"Congratulations, master! You have made history!"

Seeing the princes take their leave, Xie Lingyun could no longer hold in her excitement as she exclaimed.

Wu Qiankun bit his lip but remained silent.

Even he had to acknowledge that the plan of splitting them up, if realised, would neutralise the Yuan Country's threat.

He felt regretful for not being able to accomplish this noble plan under his leadership.

'If everything in the grass plains is settled, and if this person

directs his attention to Wu Country, what should I do?'

Thinking about this, Wu Qiankun was in fear.

While he was in fear, Fang Yuan coincidentally turned his head around and looked at him, which made him lost for words.

"It's still early to talk about this!"

Fang Yuan looked at Dragon City and was lost in his own thoughts. "Pass the order down for all soldiers to be on alert, to prepare for any sneak attacks from the Yuan Country!"

"What?"

Xie Lingyun was shocked.

"Although they are disappointed, they have not lost all hope yet. Without a defeat, how would they listen to us?"

Fang Yuan snickered, as though he had seen through all of them.

...

At midnight, the Second Prince A Guda and Eighth Prince Ge Ritu came together to prepare to attack the camp. However, they met with an ambush and were squarely defeated. Zhuo Li Getu was killed. On the second day, First Prince Ba Tu presented Dragon City and surrendered. He was made the king, and the other princes were made their own kings as well. The conflicts which would go on to last a hundred years between the princes on the grass plains have finally begun.....

Chapter 191: Dream People

After the 8 princes were made kings, there was peace in the grass plains.

The Yuan Wu Conference came to an end; or perhaps, it should be changed to the Xia Secluded Conference. Every country led their soldiers back to their countries.

Although the process was a perilous one, with the appearance of someone more superior than him, Wu Qiankun was lucky to have witnessed the splitting up of Yuan Country's power. Without the threat from them invading the South, he left the conference with mixed feelings.

His loss was the greatest. Not only had he lost both Wu Wudao and General Fei Long, even some parts of his territory had to be given up. It would be interesting to see how he could maintain his rule over his people.

But of course, all these were none of Fang Yuan's business.

After the conference, he bade farewell to the king of Xia Country and Xie Lingyun, and left for the plains on a red horse.

"Whooooo!"

A strong gust of wind blew across the plains. The grass was all lying on the ground, dried up and hardened. There was a feeling as though the world had come to an end in the coldness of the plains.

"Winter is here!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath. "The people of Yuan Country living in the plains are going to suffer this winter!"

As the 8 kings fought against each other, and without the chance to invade South, this winter would lead to many freezing to their deaths. The only way out was for them to recklessly plunder from the people in the North, but this would lead to dire consequences.

But again, all these did not matter to him.

"There is a big lake another 20 miles ahead, and the Sunset Division used to be here. However, they are now wiped out under the command of Ba Tu..."

As he moved forward, he could smell a strong rotting stench, coupled with the smell of blood.

Many vultures and crows were already circling the sky, ready to enjoy a feast.

"I've heard that the Sunset Division is one of the more well-known divisions in the North of Yuan Country, with over a thousand well-built men. If they really want to wipe them out, they'll have to prepare a hole large enough to bury 10,000 people!"

Fang Yuan galloped forward on his horse and arrived at a battlefield. Although it had already been cleaned up, remnants of the battle including broken bones were scattered around, attracting the company of wild wolves and dogs.

After the war, what was left of the original yurt was a skeleton in its place, and the ground was charred. It was as though the place was being burnt down.

Hell! Hell! Hell!

This place which resembled hell made Fang Yuan sigh.

After remaining silent for a while, he closed his eyes and started his cultivation. A purple fog appeared in front of him once again.

"Whooo! Whooo!"

The purple fog took on the shape of a snake and slithered around. Finally, it became an arrowhead and seemed to be pointing in a certain direction.

Without hesitation, Fang Yuan followed the purple fog.

After the lake, the terrain was undulating and Fang Yuan arrived at a rift valley.

Fang Yuan dismounted his horse and followed the purple fog in, as he ventured into the depths of the rift valley.

After a day's journey, the sky slowly darkened. The sun set in the west as the moon slowly rose from the east, illuminating the entire place with moonlight.

There was a small lake within the rift valley, and in it was a perfect reflection of the full moon, and it appeared illusionary like it was a dream.

Beside the lake, there was a green rock, and on the green rock laid a beautiful woman which seemed to have come from a dreamscape - it was Purple Dream.

"You're here?"

She looked up and gazed innocently at Fang Yuan, as though she had already predicted that he would come.

"You're not human!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and replied in a deep voice.

"How am I not human?"

Purple Dream smiled and raised her palm. Under the moonlight, her palm was like an exquisite piece of white jade. "I have flesh and blood, I have emotions, and I have everything a woman has. How am I not human? Dream Master Fang?"

"You knew..."

Fang Yuan sighed once more.

From the first time he interacted with this woman, he could sense a familiar spiritual aura from her, and his findings had confirmed his suspicions.

This lady, Purple Dream, was not an original human of the Da Qian world, but the creation of a dream master!

A dream master could be skilled to the extent of creating an

entire world! Of course, they could create animals with life!

However, from an object to a spiritual object, to a living thing, to animals with wisdom and finally, to humans, every one of these stages possesses a huge amount of difficulty.

If the dream master who created Purple Dream was still alive, his cultivation might be even higher than that of Master Wenxin!

"I have only heard of the existence of 'dream people' in the Da Qian Empire. I never thought that I would meet one here!"

Fang Yuan sighed. "Where's your owner?"

"Owner?"

Purple Dream smiled innocently. "I would rather use the term 'Almighty Father'!"

Fang Yuan silently agreed. A dream master who had the ability to create worlds and humans was worthy of this title.

"What a pity... He doesn't know!"

There was a pitiful look on her mesmerizing face. "Almighty Father is no longer here... Besides, I have no idea why I'm here. I only remembered that there was a crack in the heavens and on the earth before I came to this world. I was abandoned here and wandered off into the plains. It was only after a while before the Sunset Division found me, and they worshipped me..."

"Previously, Ba Tu came here and mindlessly killed everyone from the Sunset Division. I wanted to take revenge for them. The old king is dead, and Ba Tu is next!"

She remained expressionless, even as she was describing the act of killing. She appeared calm. "Are you here to stop me?"

"Although they might already have plans and killing him might work out in the short term, but his son would simply ascend to the throne... There's not much difference!"

Fang Yuan shrugged his shoulders. "As a form of trade, since

you've owed me a favour, I will need you to return the favour!"

"Return the favour?"

Purple Dream smiled. "Dream master, do you know that to us, the dream people, you dream masters are our owners? Don't you... want to place your imprint on me and make me your slave?"

Fang Yuan let out a long sigh.

He had to admit that this woman in front of him was an exquisite being.

However, he could only see sorrow in her beautiful eyes.

The wisdom of humans came from the ability of humans to think. However, this might not be a good thing entirely. For example, humans might occasionally doubt themselves.

This was especially true of the dream people.

If dream masters had absolute control over them, would their existence in the world be a reality or just an illusion?

If they don't even have a conscious 'self', how pitiful would that be?

Without reason, Fang Yuan's soul had a sudden realization. "To survive and have descendants are the two main desires of living things. However, these two desires can be summarised as 'existence!' Prove to the world and yourself that you are in existence!"

The concept of eternity and everlasting were just a continuation of 'existence'.

"To this world, as long as you exist, there is nothing more to it! Since you are living and breathing now, you are proof of existence. Why bother about what others think of you?"

Purple Dream shuddered in shock as she heard Fang Yuan.

After a long while, she smiled and replied. "You're so

contradicting. In the beginning, you lectured me on how I was not human, but now you're consoling me... I have to admit that what you said make sense. It seems that I should not stay in the plains, but should travel South and read your books and immerse myself in your culture. There are so many new concepts and ideas to be learnt..."

"You are on Ba Tu's side, and since I've killed him, I've indeed owed you a favour. What do you want?"

After much consideration, she asked.

Fang Yuan began to realise that this dream person, Purple Dream, had a mind purer than most humans.

'Is this the design of the dream master who created her, or is this just a natural flaw?'

Fang Yuan stumbled for a while. "I don't need much. It's enough I can get information on how to pass through the plains and head towards Da Qian Empire!"

"Are you intending to go to Da Qian Empire?"

Purple Dream looked at Fang Yuan with curiosity. She began nodding her head but quickly shook her head. "The plains is a perilous place, and it's nothing like how you imagine it to be. I almost died there, but fortunately, the Sunset Division saved me. As for you, you might be able to make the journey..."

"Oh? What are the dangers of the plains?"

Fang Yuan became more and more interested.

"I only know a little..."

Purple Dream's voice became a little muffled. "At the extreme North of the Yuan boundary, there are strong and intense cold winds blowing at almost every moment. It is a living hell, and I was abandoned there the moment I arrived in this world. Although it was only at the boundary, it was enough to injure me severely.

Furthermore... you won't be alone there. Ferocious animals lurk in that area..."

"Rumour has it... the path towards Da Qian Empire passes through that place. If you want to make your way there, you will first have to pass through the Northern-most boundary of Yuan Country. Other than the natural threats, the people and divisions there are extremely unwelcoming. Together with the existence of shamans and warriors, even the Yuan Country could not deal with them."

After hearing the information, Fang Yuan tried to remember it and nodded his head continuously. "Don't you worry! Before losing all hope of going there, I wouldn't recklessly make my way there."

He knew that it was no simple task to journey from the mainland to Da Qian Empire.

This was also why the evil dream master Yang Fan and his own master, Master Wenxin, had decided to hide in the mainland.

"That you for your advice, lady. We owe each other nothing now!"

After obtaining what he wanted, Fang Yuan cupped his fists and thanked her before taking his leave without hesitation. This made Purple Dream very curious.

'The living things actualised from dream worlds are weird, and behind her existence is an extremely skilled dream master. Even though it seems that he might have met with an accident, I'm not sure if he's really dead. It isn't a good idea for me to get involved in this.'

Outside the rift valley, Fang Yuan flipped on his horse, his eyes glittering with excitement.

He had his takeaways from this journey to the plains. From breaking through to the Meridian Opening Stage, to successfully defeating both Yuan and Wu Country, and finally the information

and tips from Purple Dream, it was all a delight for him.

"Next up would be to return to Green Peak spiritual land to continue my cultivation..."

After letting out a long breath, his eyes were filled with determination.

Master Wenxin's regret and whatever he was pursuing could not be satisfied if he stayed in the mainland.

Da Qian Empire was his stage to perform!

Of course, he would not attempt the journey blindly without preparation. Firstly, he had to accustom himself to every corner of the mainland and take advantage of all the resources it could provide to him. Only when he had achieved the peak in his cultivation would he try out the journey to Da Qian!

Chapter 192: Three Years

Three years later, at Green Peak spiritual land.

Half of the hill was covered in red; it was planted with the Flame Jade Rice, and the large rice stalks bent downwards, giving it the feeling of a bountiful harvest.

In the sky, many red-eyed white birds were circling, flying through the bewildering fog; they were hunting for prey in the mountains.

At the bottom of the cliff, the originally small pond was expanded, taking up the shape of a natural lake. The spiritual king fish was swimming about casually, and following it was a school of small spiritual fish. As they were enjoying their time swimming, they occasionally spit out water from the lake.

"As long as my heart is there, I can achieve the state of peace!"

In front of the straw cottage, Fang Yuan placed a teapot filled with tea. As he slowly sipped his tea, he appeared to be deep in thought.

Even though quite some time had passed, his appearance remained the same from the time he had broken through the Elemental Gathering Stage.

"What a pity... I still cannot achieve a breakthrough to reach the Illusionary Divine stage. The Questioning Heart Tea and other spiritual objects have no effect on me now!"

In the past three years, Secluded Country and Xia Country ruled the mainland, and Fang Yuan was able to obtain a continuous supply of spiritual plants.

Level 5 Botany was not to be belittled. This skill of his allowed him to experience many plants evolving special traits, but he was not lucky at all. It was either the special trait evolved was useless, or it was similar to the Flame Jade Rice. There was nothing special

which would catch his attention.

"Up until now, even the Flame Jade Rice can no longer satisfy my needs. However, it's still a good source of food for the Red-eyed White Birds and the spiritual fish..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin.

The Yang Family's Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique required him to have a scarily huge intake of food.

His Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique was mainly composed of this Giant Spiritual Technique, and therefore they had similar requirements.

With the large amounts of spiritual objects and the Flame Jade Rice, his cultivation was exceedingly quick at the beginning. However, as time passed, the spiritual objects slowly lost their effectiveness and could only be used to replenish his energy.

Fang Yuan guessed that it was his way of consuming spiritual food as staples which resulted in them losing their medicinal properties.

There was an easy solution to this. It was to look for even rarer and higher-tiered spiritual objects. However, on the mainland, it was almost impossible to find a spiritual object that had an effect on Fang Yuan.

There was another solution; to do alchemy and make spiritual pills.

In fact, Fang Yuan was already using this method. After wasting much spiritual medicine, he felt a huge improvement in his alchemy technique. He was already extremely well-versed with the Fire Hand Palm, and there was no doubt that he could go out and convince others that he was an alchemy master.

However, even though he had a lot of spiritual objects in his hand and had an extensive collection of them, there were only a few spiritual pills that were beneficial to him. Even if Fang Yuan were

to snatch over those useful spiritual pill formulas, he would slowly consume them till they had no effect on him.

Moreover, he generously fed the Flame Jade Rice and other spiritual objects to the birds and fish, and this must have given him something in return.

It might be due to the spiritual land or due to the spiritual objects that the original population of the Red-eyed White Birds slowly recovered. Even for the lake beneath the cliff, Fang Yuan had painstakingly caught a few silverfish and kept them in the lake before they became more active.

"With the help of the spiritual pills and spiritual objects, I have finally formed half a spiritual meridian. It will be up to today to see if I can form the remaining!

With anticipation in his eyes, he stood up and walked to the spiritual medicine garden.

This place was expanded and was very much different from the past. It housed many valuable and rare spiritual plants, as well as many plants which have evolved their special trait.

If any alchemy master from the mainland were to stumble upon this spiritual medicine farm, he would probably go crazy over it, but this place was nothing special in Fang Yuan's eyes.

As he came to the spiritual medicine garden, he noticed a small tree with a bark that was jet-black in colour. It was as though the small tree was smelted by metal.

On the branches of the tree, red and round fruits were hanging, and there was a clear fragrance coming from it.

The fruit had a unique shape. It had the appearance of a red date but it was much larger. There was a hint of green on the otherwise red fruit.

"Chirp chirp!"

"Keke!"

The Red-eyed White King Bird, Iron-tailed Black Eagle and the Flower Fox Ferret were squatting at one side, looking in anticipation.

"The Vermilion Fruit tree... It's finally maturing, what a long wait!"

Fang Yuan's eyes welled up.

The maturity period of this fruit tree was too long; even he himself almost lost confidence in it.

The good thing was that there was another of it by its side for him to compare and monitor the growth of the tree, and he had finally arrived at this moment.

"Whooo!"

At noontime, something miraculous happened.

The green colour of the Vermilion Fruit slowly disappeared and the fragrance of the fruit became stronger by about 10 times!

The flock of Red-eyed White Birds became frenzied, and even the Spiritual King Fish in the lake was whipping its tail on the surface of the lake, showing its dissatisfaction.

"The Vermilion Fruit, it's ripe!"

Fang Yuan was excited and reached his hand out to pluck one of the Vermilion Fruit, before stuffing it in his mouth.

"Kacha!"

It was as crunchy as a ripe apple, and the bitten Vermilion Fruit had a crescent moon mouth shape on it. The fruit was filled with juice.

"Gulu!"

As Fang Yuan swallowed, a gush of warm energy flowed down into his belly, transforming into a pure spiritual energy!

The Vermilion Fruit was classified as a Mystery Grade spiritual plant, and consuming it directly would be beneficial.

Without wasting the opportunity, Fang Yuan closed his eyes and harnessed the huge amount of energy in him.

"Rumble!"

A strong force exploded in Fang Yuan's body, and amidst the gushing wind, a spiritual meridian formed on his chest and it was extremely distinct.

"Chila!"

Following, another spiritual meridian appeared on his back and glowed brightly. Furthermore, another faint spiritual meridian started to appear on his right arm, albeit only about a tenth of an actual spiritual meridian.

In his stats window, the original [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 3 (51%))] jumped and became (Grade 3 (55%))!

"Such an improvement? Unbelievable!"

Fang Yuan laughed heartily and picked up the Vermilion Fruit, stuffing the rest of it in his mouth.

"Hmph..."

As he continued to improve in his cultivation, the spiritual meridian on his right arm became increasingly bright, as it started to form.

As the number jumped erratically, the proficiency points of Grade 3 suddenly exploded and became 70%!

"Ah! Not enough! Barely enough!"

As his eyes opening wide, the veins on his forehead popped out. He could feel that the spiritual energy in his body had stabilized. Forcefully, he grabbed another Vermilion Fruit and stuffed it into his mouth.

"Rumble!"

Spiritual energy resembling a tsunami was released and a huge pressure made Fang Yuan a little dizzy at the moment. With the assistance from such a spiritual force, the third spiritual meridian formed and disappeared within his body.

"The third meridian of Wu Zong, I've done it!"

He looked at his stats window:

"Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 30

Spirit: 30

Magic: 9.9

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Dream-building Master (Peak of Elemental Gathering Realm)], Wu Zong (Third Meridian)

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 4) (1%)], Ecstasy Spell, Shadowstep

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"The third spiritual meridian! Together with my initial Second Elemental Force, I am at the Fifth Elemental Force!"

The Illusionary Divine Stage of a dream master was a huge step. Even though he might be stuck in his cultivation as a dream master, he was far ahead of everyone else in terms of martial arts.

The world was an interesting place. With so many coincidences happening on him, even Fang Yuan would be lost for words.

As he looked at the sparse Vermilion Fruit tree and the few spiritual beasts beside him who were all in shock, he smiled helplessly.

"The remaining fruits would not be enough for me to form the fourth spiritual meridian... Furthermore, I have a feeling that the

resources in the mainland are slowly becoming useless to me!"

To a highly skilled person in the Elemental Gathering Realm, the mainland was not a place which would aid in their cultivation. Spiritual plants were at most of Mystery or Yellow Grade and had limited properties. The spiritual pills produced were also not the ideal pills everyone would want their hands on.

He had the strong urge of disregarding everything and embark on his journey to Da Qian Empire.

"To think about it, the Questioning Heart Tea has lost its effect on me, and same goes to the Flame Jade Rice. If the Vermilion Fruit end up the same as well, I don't really have a choice..."

Fang Yuan did his research on this phenomenon.

After reading many ancient records and through his detailed predictions, his understanding of the mainland was slowly deepened.

"This mainland is desert to spiritual energy. It is scarce in natural elemental energy, and there are only a few who trained from a normal human to become something extraordinary!"

The scarcity of elemental energy would lead to a decrease in the existence of spiritual plants, which would cause spiritual knights of the Elemental Gathering Realm to be unable to achieve their breakthrough, and this was a vicious cycle.

To break out of this, he either had to change the entire landscape or escape this mudpit.

Of course, Fang Yuan did not have the ability to change the entire place, and therefore he could only choose to escape and find opportunities elsewhere.

But before leaving, he had a few things on hand to settle.

"Regarding spiritual objects, the spiritual objects here are almost useless to me. Furthermore, I have the Mountain River Pearl and

have already stored loads of it..."

Things that were stored in the Mountain River Pearl would not rot, and therefore there was nothing to be worried about.

"As for the Secluded Country, Xia Country and the group of disciples and subordinates, it would be like firing a shopkeeper... The most important is still master's inheritance!"

Master Wenxin had left behind three portions of inheritance, and Fang Yuan had only inherited two of them.

Being stuck before the Illusionary Divine Stage led him to try out different ways to achieve the breakthrough but to no avail.

"But now, I have a new breakthrough in my martial arts. Based on what I've practised before, I can try my luck!"

After thinking, he immediately went to try it out. Fang Yuan came to the Red-eyed White King Bird's nest in the cave, which was where Master Wenxin had left his inheritance.

In front of the purple crystal door.

Fang Yuan stretched his hands out, and his dream elemental force surged.

However, the door stood still and nothing moved. It seemed that his efforts were put to waste.

"The Illusionary Divine Stage is too difficult... Not only does it require talent and hard work, more importantly, it requires an opportunity... the last gate that master had put in place must be related to my abilities!"

Fang Yuan took in a deep breath and utilized his Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique. Three spiritual meridians appeared on his body before disappearing again.

"Ha! Purify Essence into Spirit! Purify Spirit into Magic! Change in type of elemental force!"

As he exclaimed, his martial art elemental force flowed through

his spiritual meridian and undergone a miraculous change as it flowed to his forehead between his eyebrows.

"Rumble!"

As his Zu Qiao shook, something changed.

His brute martial art elemental force, through his intentional regulation, had turned into the incomprehensible dream elemental force. Like a huge river, the dream elemental force flowed into the purple crystal door.

15 minutes! 30 minutes!

After 45 minutes, the door finally moved!

Chapter 193: Yuan Sect

"Buzz! Buzz!"

The originally stiff purple crystal door started to glow, and the glow started to swirl.

As the door was pushed open, there was only a stone wall behind; the entire place was barren.

Fang Yuan licked his lips and took out the jade.

"Whoosh!"

Suddenly, many gold words appeared on the stone wall. Like tadpoles, they became a glow of light and entered the jade.

"Fang Yuan, my disciple..."

At the same time, a faint light appeared, forming the shape of an old man wearing a crown.

"Master!"

Even though he knew that that was not the real master, he still respectfully bowed.

"If you can reach this stage, it means that you have achieved a breakthrough to the Elemental Gathering Realm, very good!"

Wenxin, no! Master Heartless stroked his beard and looked down. He was filled with emotion, and it did not seem like a simple imagery.

"I will teach you everything that I've learnt! After achieving a breakthrough to the Elemental Gathering Realm, you should be the strongest in the mainland. I'm sure you'd harbour thoughts of going to the Da Qian Empire, am I right? If that is so, I can trust you to handle some of my unsettled business..."

After hearing Master Heartless' explanation, Fang Yuan became increasingly stressed.

"Remember, before you are skilled enough, don't avenge... me!"

Slowly, the light dimmed and Master Heartless's voice became increasingly soft. Finally, there was silence and the last glow of light fell to the ground and vanished.

"I will follow your orders, Master!"

Fang Yuan remained solemn.

His master was already considered highly skilled among the dream masters; quite ahead of the Illusionary Divine Stage.

To think about it, if he were to face his master's enemy now, he would only be an ant; or to be more accurate, an ant with a big head, but still an ant!

"I might need to wait until I've broken through to the Illusionary Divine Stage and reach the peak of it, or I could complete the Meridian Opening Stage and form the martial artist Divine Body before I have the rights to think about revenge!"

Fang Yuan kept the jade properly, and there was a fire burning in his eyes.

"The Illusionary Divine stage is too hard to break through, and for martial arts wise, I'm slowly approaching a dead end once again..."

This was his sentiment after forming his third spiritual meridian.

After all, most parts of his Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique was discovered by himself. The only reference he had was the Qian Kun Giant Spiritual Technique and the parts on Meridian Opening. Other than that, the various books he had read through in the governor's office were not detailed and did not have much value for him to take reference.

He didn't even get his hands on the book which described forming the martial artist Divine Body.

This resulted in him not being able to swiftly advance in his

cultivation, and every step he took was an arduous one.

"In Meridian Opening, the first three meridians can be grouped together and are bottlenecks to be broken through before one can form them. However, the difficulty of forming the fourth spiritual meridian is much higher than the first three, and it would be too scary to imagine how I would break through to form the 7th spiritual meridian. But if I manage to do it, I would be a respected even in Da Qian Empire..."

Fang Yuan looked at his stats window and was deep in thought.

He was stuck regardless if it was his martial arts cultivation, his dream master cultivation, or even his skills.

His entire cultivation seemed to have arrived at a 'huge bottleneck'.

The place he lived in was small and there was not enough elemental energy. This had already caused him some problems in advancing further.

"I am only Level 3 in Medicine. Even though I've saved countless lives in the past three years, it is still the same. As for Botany, the spiritual plants I have are of low grades and are no longer able to help me in breaking through..."

Fang Yuan sighed and left the cave. He returned to a specific spot at the boundary of the spiritual garden.

Over here, the land was barren. There was a thick layer of silver shavings forming the shape of a wreath.

That was all. There were no signs of any plant life.

"This is the only chance I have at breaking through my Botany skill, but it's a pity..."

As his eyes glittered, Fang Yuan raised his right hands and grabbed the soil.

"Whoosh!"

The ground beneath split, revealing a jet-black seed that was underwhelming, and the seed landed in his hands.

This was one of the treasures he had obtained from Lu Renjia's secret mansion.

Lu Renjia was indeed a famous alchemy master. His assets were extremely valuable and all his spiritual pills aided Fang Yuan in his breakthroughs. The hide of the Star-eyed Leopard was slowly made into a piece of armour in the past three years, and Fang Yuan wore it inside him ever since.

This seed was very mysterious. Fang Yuan guessed that it might be of Earth Grade or even Heaven Grade since even the energy from it could help Fang Yuan break through his Botany bottleneck. If it could germinate, it would surely aid Fang Yuan in breaking through once more.

In the past three years, Fang Yuan had resorted to all means, but the seed remained as such, which was disappointing news.

"They might have a way to make it germinate in Da Qian Empire!"

With this thought, Fang Yuan's hand glowed and the seed was kept safely in the Mountain River Pearl.

"These Vermilion Fruits are now useless to me, split it among yourselves!"

After finishing up, Fang Yuan came out and saw the three spiritual beasts waiting outside. "I'll be leaving for quite some time. Take care and guard this piece of spiritual land for me!"

"Keke!"

Thinking about this, the Flower Fox Ferret became anxious. He rushed towards Fang Yuan and nibbled on his robe.

The Red-Eyed White King Bird and the Iron-tailed Black Eagle displayed their reluctance as well.

"Alright, be good!"

These three spiritual beasts already had the cultivation level comparable to a 12th Gate martial artist. However, they have yet to break through to reach Wu Zong.

After all, the gate to unlocking elemental force was not easy to begin with. How could they easily achieve it?

"I'll miss the three of you, but it will be troublesome to bring the three of you along..."

Fang Yuan sighed.

It was much convenient if he could ride on the birds and fly. However, this journey of his would require him to go through the extreme North of the plains where strong gusts of winds would be constantly blowing, making it extremely arduous to fly.

Furthermore, in Da Qian Empire, spiritual beasts which have not attained Wu Zong were of not much use.

He would rather leave them at home to practise by themselves. Who knows, since Green Peak spiritual land was mystical, together with the spiritual plants, he might come home to a surprise.

Of course, he had to settle tons of other stuff before he could go.

"Let's go!"

He leapt onto the Red-Eyed White King Bird and commanded it to fly.

In an instant, the Red-Eyed White King Bird spread its wings and flew into the clouds.

....

Secluded Mountain Prefecture City.

After going through an expansion, this place was now the capital city of Secluded Country. The city spread out like a spider web and pathways stretched across the city. There were many people and

the entire place was prosperous, much more prosperous than before.

"Chirp chirp!"

The Red-Eyed White King Bird was rather familiar with this place as it flew above the city walls towards the palace.

"It's country governor, sir!"

On the city walls, the soldiers on patrol started to kneel down and paid their respects in the direction of the white bird.

"Greetings, sir!"

Before the palace, Niu Dingtian, Zhang Qingfeng and the others had gotten news of Fang Yuan's arrival and made their way to receive him. This included Zhou Wenwu, Chen Qing, Yu Xinlou and the other ministers.

"Forget about all these useless greetings!"

Fang Yuan came down from the bird's back and waved his hands casually. "How's the country?"

"With your reputation and the close partnership with Xia Country, everything is fine. Just last month, we have received gifts from Wu Country!"

Niu Dingtian reported respectfully.

"As for the internal affairs, we have taken in the refugees, allocated barren land for farming and set up another caravan. Trade has been blooming too ever since the previous war. Now that we have another new piece of territory from the Wu Country, the people have started to move there. 10 years is all we need to become the strongest country on the mainland!"

As he spoke, Zhou Wenwu's eyes were filled with excitement.

"Mmm, pass the order that I have something important to announce during tonight's banquet!"

Fang Yuan lowered his head and walked into the palace.

This was where the original Prefecture Master's mansion was. After undergoing renovation, everything was simple since he was not a person who likes to show off. As he was living in Green Peak spiritual land, there was no use in decorating the palace with gold and silver.

"King!"

As the servants and concubine saw him, all of them paid their respects.

Especially for the concubines, they were all local and selected by the ministers. They had the perfect body shape and all of them looked at him in anticipation.

They all wanted to be Queen.

After all, it was weird for Fang Yuan to be King. Although he was the King, he had no wife, no children. This raised a lot of suspicion and the women who were selected to be his concubines got into conflicts, and some of them even died fighting. All of these made Fang Yuan speechless, and he had no choice but to order his subordinates to keep them in check. Only then there was peace.

Although he had no restrictions, he was still unwilling to start a family even though he was not religious.

After all, he was prepared to go to the Da Qian Empire. If he left his wife and children behind, wouldn't he be leaving them at risk of harm?

Therefore, to avoid this, he decided not to start a family.

"To the royal study!"

He ordered a servant directly.

"Yes, sir!"

This servant had a pleasant look, which reminded him of someone.

One year after the Lin Family was locked up, Fang Yuan remembered them and ordered Zhou Wenwu to release them. Using his dream master's technique, he erased Lin Leiyue's memory, and from there cut all ties with them.

As for the alchemy disciple Ling Yin, she was being made a test subject by Fang Yuan. After a few times of altering her memories, she almost became senile. However, she was now loyal to Fang Yuan and was brought to the palace to become a minister.

The royal study.

After dismissing the servant, Fang Yuan walked in and waited for a while.

"Sect Master... we're here!"

A few delicate voices were heard.

"Come in!"

As the door slowly opened a few people walked in. They had a strong spiritual aura; all of them were Wu Zongs. Among them were two ladies.

"Greetings, sect master!"

As soon as these few people saw Fang Yuan, they bowed and greeted him respectfully.

There was a lady. In her eyes were mixed emotions of sorrow and resentment, but it was unsettled. This lady was Shi Yutong!

"Please rise!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands. "All of you are elders of Yuan Sect, please disregard the formalities!"

Three years ago, not only did Fang Yuan start the Secluded Country, but he had also started a sect of his own. He had created the largest organisation of martial artists in the mainland, and it was called Yuan Sect!

Members had to contribute to obtain and share martial arts technique, and among them, there were even people achieving the Meridian Opening Stage. The recruitment did not restrict them based on their family background, and therefore many martial artists started to join. It was not the strongest sect in the mainland, and from then on, the Secluded Country became the holy ground for all martial artists.

Chapter 194: Heart Attack

Fang Yuan, who had advanced into the Meridian Opening Stage, was no doubt the strongest martial artist in the mainland.

With his reputation and the allure of his techniques, coupled with the fact that the requirements to enter his sect were low, it was only natural for Yuan Sect to grow and become stronger.

In fact, Fang Yuan believed that Yuan Sect, with all the happenings, had more potential than Secluded Country.

Or should I say, a martial artists' organisation acting like a sect?

No one could forever be king of a country, but for these type of organisations, if managed properly, could live up to a thousand years!

"We now have a system to receive contributions, and it was well received by the various counties!"

"Regarding the search in the archaeological site, it is in progress now. A few martial artists have already reported the location of several secret treasures, including the inheritance which has the details on how to attain the Elemental Gathering Stage!"

"Wu Country and Zhu Country have already found out about our bounty. I think we won't have to wait long before they will offer us a contribution!"

...

In front of Fang Yuan, even Wu Zongs had to be on their toes as they reported their findings to him.

"Very good!"

After hearing the reports, he nodded his head in satisfaction. "I want to initiate a council made up of 9 elders to lead Yuan Sect. When I'm not around, the 9 of you will vote to make decisions, and decide based on the majority!"

"Yes, Sir!"

These 9 Wu Zongs bowed.

In reality, it was already common for Fang Yuan to be absent most of the time. The few elders were already used to handling problems on their own.

This was just officialising what they were normally doing.

"Are there any updates regarding the secret treasure? I don't want normal news. I want those that even Wu Zongs find it hard to obtain!"

This was Fang Yuan's plan.

After putting together the mainland's resources, he wanted to dig up the inheritance.

Since Master Wenxin and Yang Fan could escape to the mainland, there must be a third person! Or a fourth!

Those who were able to make the journey from Da Qian Empire to the mainland had to be highly skilled, and had to be at least in the Elemental Opening Stage!

If he could discover their inheritance, it would be a huge boost to Fang Yuan.

"There's one in the middle of Yan Country!"

Shi Yutong looked up, took a step forward and reported.

"Yan Country?"

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin and unintentionally noticed her beautiful figure.

A smart person will know the right choice in difficult times. After being held captive for many years by Fang Yuan, Shi Yutong finally revealed the secret treasure of Spirit Returning Sect and became completely loyal to Fang Yuan.

Of course, Fang Yuan wouldn't admit that his dream-accessing

technique played a huge part in converting Shi Yutong. At least, it lessened her hostile intent. Otherwise, it would be a difficult task to convince her.

"Yan Country?"

Fang Yuan sighed and asked. "Does it have any special characteristics?"

"For normal inheritance, like the ones left behind by Wu Zongs, a martial artist at the 12th Gate might not be able to obtain the inheritance, but at least he would be able to make it out alive..."

Shi Yutong's voice was clear like spring water. "But for the one at Yan Country, we have sent 5 12th Gate martial artists, but none of them was able to make it out alive. It's extremely dangerous!"

"Oh?"

Hearing what she said, Fang Yuan became interested.

A Wu Zong's inheritance was useless to him. He wanted unique inheritance that even Wu Zongs would have trouble obtaining! Only from there would he have a chance to get what he needed.

"I'll follow you tomorrow!"

After a while, Fang Yuan was determined. Quickly, he dismissed the people of Yuan Sect and walked to the main court of the palace.

The main court was luxurious and the pillars were decorated with dragons and phoenixes. In the middle was a throne decorated with 9 golden dragons on it.

As Fang Yuan arrived, many people were already waiting in the main court.

"Greetings, King!"

He was wearing plain clothes as he casually sat on the dragon throne. Everyone still greeted him respectfully and were on their toes.

"Mm, my dear people, do away with the formalities!"

Fang Yuan raised his right hand and gave off the vibe of a king.

"I am always in meditation and is unable to see to all the country's affairs timely. Therefore, I am going to initiate a system to select 7 ministers to make decisions on behalf of myself. They will vote to decide on matters..."

In reality, it was similar to what he had done in Yuan Sect.

By splitting up power for them to manage the sect and country, he would avoid the problem of one person having too much power.

Or put in other terms, he could ensure that the power would remain split for a period of time.

As such, Fang Yuan would be able to settle issues easily if he ever comes back one day.

Of course, this was all he could do, and the rest was up to fate. If there would be a day where Secluded Country would fall, it would just be a mere pity to Fang Yuan.

He scanned across all his ministers.

Zhou Wenwu, Yu Xinlou, Zhang Qingfeng, Niu Dingtian... of course, and his two disciples.

He would hand this country over to them temporarily.

"Master..."

Chen Ziyang and Lanruo both felt that there was something amiss. After the meeting, both of them stayed behind and waited for Fang Yuan. Lanruo's eyes were already welled up, as though both of them knew that something was wrong.

"Haha... Don't worry, I am just preparing to meditate for a very very long time..."

Fang Yuan rubbed Lanruo's head. He was not prepared to say the truth.

"Master, you cannot abandon me!"

Even though Lanruo was already a few years older, she was still like a child. She stretched out her hands and stuck out a little finger. "Promise me!"

"Yes!"

Fang Yuan promised her as they hooked their fingers together.

...

The next day, early in the morning, in sight of many, the Red-Eyed White King Bird flew up into the sky and disappeared into the clouds.

"Whooo! Whooo!"

The strong wind was gushing by Fang Yuan's ears.

From up above, the entire city and the people looked like miniature toys.

"To Yan Country!"

Fang Yuan tapped the bird's head and used his spiritual will to direct it to a certain direction. Afterwards, he took a quick look at the beauty beside him.

"Sect Head!"

Shi Yutong appeared pale. However, as a Wu Zong, she was still able to handle the intensity of flying. As she saw Fang Yuan looking over at her, she blushed and nodded her head.

"For the journey to Yan Country, I have prepared to take a detour to Wu Country first to settle some other matters!"

Fang Yuan went straight to the point.

"Wu Country?"

Shi Yutong asked.

"You're a clever person!"

Fang Yuan rattled on. "I'm sure you've guessed what I'm about to do, am I right?"

Shi Yutong turned pale and replied. "You're a deep person, Sect Head. How would I dare to guess your intentions?"

"I won't hide it from you. The country governor of Wu Country is trouble, and I'm preparing to kill him!"

Fang Yuan continued. "Everything that I've established originated from my martial arts, and I'm sure you are aware of this. Therefore, I want you to take good care of Yuan Sect and Secluded Country while I'm gone..."

"Yes, Sir!"

Shi Yutong replied respectfully.

After his repeated hints, she had mixed feelings of love and hatred for Fang Yuan, but could not do anything as she was weaker than him.

Before becoming confident of taking down Fang Yuan, she would not dare to do anything.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

At this moment, the Red-Eyed White King Bird let out a long chirp.

As Fang Yuan looked down, he realised that they had flown into Wu Country's airspace. The three mountains in front were surrounding a mountainous city.

"We are now in the capital of Wu Country..."

Seeing this, Fang Yuan smiled.

...

In the palace of Wu Country.

Wu Qiankun was reading a book. Suddenly, he had an uneasy feeling as though something bad was about to happen. He paced

about in his palace and tossed his ancient book on his red sandalwood table.

"Pa!"

As the book landed, the surrounding servants shivered in fear and did not dare to breathe a word. They were afraid of being picked on by Wu Qiankun to let out his anger. The situation had been like that since the independence of Secluded Country three years ago.

'Why am I feeling so uneasy today? Did I miss out anything recently?'

Wu Qiankun used to be a valiant warrior and was middle-aged, but not old. However, now, he started to have white hair growing from his sideburns.

"All of you, get out! Without any instructions, don't come in!"

He frowned as he casually dismissed them.

"Yes, Sir!"

Hearing this, the few servants heaved a sigh of relief. Hurriedly, they left.

Wu Qiankun circled a few rounds. Suddenly, he approached his bookshelf and activated a certain mechanism.

"Kacha!"

A small drawer popped out. Inside were a few spy documents. These were all secretly obtained by Black Ice, and in it were the latest news about Secluded Country.

"There shouldn't be any problem. I've treated Secluded Country with respect and even gifted them precious valuables this time. He should be satisfied..."

As he mumbled to himself, a fog started to appear in front of him.

To him, the existence of such a person was a headache.

The good thing was that all of these would soon be history.

"Based on Black Ice's report, from his actions, he doesn't want to enjoy the riches of his country, nor the 3,000 concubines in his palace. He is just a dumb martial artist with no brains! Soon, we would not be able to satisfy him, and he would surely make his way to Da Qian Empire... Once that happens, it will be my chance!"

He clenched his fist and his face became flushed with excitement.

"Eh..."

Suddenly, he could hear someone breathing in his room.

"Who's that?"

Wu Qiankun was left in shock as he threw his teacup on the floor. Swiftly, he held on to a jade piece that was hanging from his chest, and it was glowing red.

"Let's not waste time! Since I have arrived, I would naturally have sealed this place from the outside world. Normal people will not be able to notice anything!"

Two shadows emerged from the darkness. They were Fang Yuan and Shi Yutong.

"Oh, its the king of Secluded Country. May I know why you would play such a prank on me?"

Although Wu Qiankun was asking calmly, his voice was hoarse like a dead man.

"You would know..."

Fang Yuan shook his head. "It's always your enemies that will know you best... Not many of my ministers and subordinates have guessed that I'm about to leave, but you have guessed correctly! Well done! However... I don't want to keep you alive. You would only cause trouble!"

'This is not good!'

Long before Fang Yuan's appearance, Wu Qiankun was already slowly retreating. Hearing his words, he sprinted towards the chair behind his table.

There was a secret mechanism there which would bring him through a secret tunnel, and would keep him safe by dropping a thousand-pound heavy stone!

If the stone were to drop, even Wu Zongs could not escape it.

But he was unfortunate because this was Fang Yuan!

Even before Wu Qiankun would react, the shadow of Fang Yuan flickered and the next moment, he could feel a stinging pain in his chest. All his spiritual talismans were useless, and soon after, he slowly landed on the ground, his face a hue of purple.

After seeing Fang Yuan slowly disappearing, a few moments later, a few servants entered and they were all panicking.

"The King has a heart attack!"

"Get the Imperial Doctor!"

...

The chaos ensued but became softer and softer. After taking in one last breath, he entered darkness for eternity...

Chapter 195: Poisonous Dragon

Yan Country, in the Poisonous Dragon Lake.

This was a famous location in Yan Country and was located in the deep mountains. It was covered in a green poisonous fog, and there were even reports of people seeing a dragon here!

The fog was extremely poisonous and there were no signs of life within a 10-mile radius from the lake.

There was a peak not far from here.

A few martial artists dressed in their attire were waiting with anticipation.

A man in black with a scar on his face was looking at the poisonous fog. Grabbing a golden pheasant, he threw it into the poisonous fog.

"Ke Ke!"

The golden pheasant rapidly flapped its wings, fanning the poisonous fog. As it shrieked, it struck fear in the martial artists' heart.

"Pa!"

It fell to the ground and was no longer moving.

"Whoooo! Whoo!"

As the wind blew, spotted feathers were flying everywhere and quickly disappeared.

The corpse of the golden pheasant was now just a pool of blood, flowing on the ground.

"Oh sh*t, this is indeed a perilous place!"

Scarred Face swallowed his saliva. "Lady Hu San, is it true that there's an inheritance hiding here?"

"Of course!"

A lady by his side answered. She was middle-aged and was wearing a leather robe. She had a belt made from cow's hide and on the belt were 10 flying knives hanging from it. The knives were all extremely sharp and were extremely reflective.

"If not for the fact that the poisonous fog was in this 10-mile radius and that it doesn't spread out, I wouldn't have dared to come here!"

Lady Hu San looked at the green fog and spoke in fear.

Her ancestors had received insider information about the inheritance a hundred years ago. No one was able to approach the fog even after many generations of attempts at trying. In fact, this had distracted her family from their jobs and poverty struck them.

Therefore, after the uprising of Yuan Sect, this lady boldly sacrificed herself to the sect.

"However... accomplishing this would allow me to obtain the thousand-contribution jade, and I can use that to request a good martial art technique from the sect!"

Scarred Face licked his lips in envy.

"Even the Five Elders of the Li River couldn't make it back alive. I just hope that the sect's envoy would not blame me!"

Lady Hu San smiled helplessly.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

Suddenly, a black dot appeared on the horizon.

The black dot was flying swiftly in the sky. As he approached closer, they could tell that it was a huge spiritual bird. It was white-feathered and its eyes were bloodshot, and it appeared proud.

The most shocking was the fact that it had the spiritual aura of a 12th Gate martial artist!

"Ah! This spiritual bird might just be stronger than the Five

Elders of the Li River!"

Scarred Face turned pale. "Why would it appear here?"

Although the few of them were considered skilled, all of them still suspected that if the bird was to go crazy, it could take all of them out!

To be unable to take on a bird after 10 over years of martial arts training?

"You're Lady Hu San?"

The giant bird landed and did not move. A voice was heard from the top of the bird.

"Greetings, senior!"

Lady Hu San walked up and bowed respectfully. Immediately, she saw a man and a woman walking over, as though they were from a painting.

"I am Lady Hu San. May I know who you are?"

She had already guessed who they were, and her face was flushed.

"We are from Yuan Sect. Kudos to your hard work!"

Fang Yuan remained silent. Shi Yutong walked up and replied calmly before taking out a piece of Emerald Green Jade. "This is a thousand-contribution jade. You can exchange it for what you want at any branch of the Yuan Sect!"

"Thank you, sister!"

Lady Hu San received the thousand-contribution jade respectfully and kept it properly. Looking at the jealous looks of those around her, she subconsciously touched her flying knives.

She had no doubts that if not for the presence of the two Wu Zongs, these 'old friends' of hers would risk their lives to get such a treasure on their hands.

"Tell me about what happened here!"

Seeing Lady Hu San keep the thousand-contribution jade, he continued. "Don't leave out any details!"

"Yes, Sir!"

Although he kept mum most of the time, the moment he opened his mouth, Shi Yutong retreated respectfully by his side with her hands behind her back. Immediately, Lady Hu San could tell who the real master was, and a chill went down her spine.

"Reporting!"

Since she did not know Fang Yuan's true identity, Lady Hu San decided to give her utmost respect. "The inheritance in Poisonous Dragon Lake was first discovered by my ancestor Hu Ying from an old diary. This led to my ancestors coming over to settle down in Green Dragon Country in order to obtain the inheritance. However, due to the fact that the poisonous fog is extremely dangerous, none of us could walk in long enough, even with the help of a spiritual pill as an antidote. Only those martial artist above the Earth Gate could sustain for awhile based on their own ability..."

"I had reported to Yuan Sect previously. The sect had deployed the Five Elders of the Li River to investigate. All of them had taken the Life and Death Concoction. In the Concoction were two types of worms, the male and female Concoction Worm. If one of the worms died, the other will not survive... After entering the poisonous fog, everything went smoothly at the beginning. However, after half an hour, all the 5 Concoction Worms outside died, and this meant that all five of them died as well... Forgive us!"

Lady Hu San reported, and slowly felt fearful.

After all, it was not easy to find five 12th Gate martial artists.

"Mm. Bring me the diary!"

Fang Yuan waved his hands.

Although unwilling, Lady Hu San pulled out an ancient book from her robes and presented it to Fang Yuan.

His expression remained unchanged as he slowly read the book.

After a while, Fang Yuan lifted his head up and casually waves his hands. "Alright, I am now clear of the danger here. From now on, this is none of your business, take your leave!"

Fang Yuan approached the poisonous fog and started to gather his energy.

"Buzz! Buzz!"

As he gave his elemental energy a form outside his body, he formed a bubble that wrapped around him. Taking a large step, he walked into the poisonous fog.

"Chi! Chi!"

The thick poisonous fog came to live and stuck itself on the bubble of elemental energy, trying to work its way in. This caused Fang Yuan's elemental energy to slowly deteriorate.

However, compared to his true amount of energy, this was nothing.

"Let's go!"

As he called out, Shi Yutong walked forward and waved her hands. A green elemental energy bubble appeared and she walked next to Fang Yuan. Slowly, they disappeared into the poisonous fog.

"Projecting elemental energy?!"

On the outside, Lady Hu San, Scarred Face and the rest were stunned.

When the Five Elders of the Li River came previously, they had to spend almost half a day preparing, swallowing antidotes and

spiritual pills. It was not this simple.

Furthermore, after all that preparation, they still fell short.

"Wu Zong!"

Lady Hu San remained in a trance for a while before sighing. "Both of them are Wu Zongs! Indeed, only such a person would be able to tame such a spiritual bird! The only thing is that... the appearance of this senior, and the spiritual bird..."

As her eyes widened, she had already thought of a certain possibility.

Scarred Face and the rest changed their expressions as well. Looking towards the Poisonous Dragon Lake, their eyes were filled with respect as they mumbled to themselves. "Did Sect Master personally arrive?"

...

"Sa! Sa!"

In the green poisonous fog, there was silence. The only exception was the shuffling of their feet, and it was weird to hear it in such a silence.

After walking 30 metres, the poisonous fog became increasingly concentrated and the stress on the elemental energy bubble was much stronger.

Fang Yuan was coping well, but Shi Yutong was struggling beside him as her elemental energy bubble started to glow.

"The closer we get, the more concentrated the poisonous fog would be!"

Fang Yuan lifted his leg up. There was already a pile of mud on the ground. It was as though the earth here had succumbed to the poison and had started to rot.

If not for the fact that Fang Yuan had covered his shoes in elemental energy, they might rot as well.

"Although it's called Poisonous Dragon Lake, in reality, it is just a marsh! Furthermore..."

Fang Yuan grabbed forward.

"Whoosh!"

After a flash, his hands were already filled with green worms.

These worms were half an inch long and were glowing in the green light. They also had two pairs of translucent wings and a pattern on its abdomen. It resembled a human in pain and it was extremely gruesome.

"This thing is poisonous and it seems to have the ability to decay your elemental energy. Be careful..."

With the flick of his finger, a green mark appeared on the ground. White smoke started to emerge and the ground decayed, revealing a hole.

Shi Yutong was shocked beyond words as her expression changed.

Although she was also Wu Zong, compared to Fang Yuan, there was still a stark difference.

If these green worms ambushed and attacked her, she might not have been able to defend herself.

"It seems that the ancestors of Lady Hu San did not record about these worms..."

Fang Yuan smiled, took a few steps forward and struck on the ground with his right foot.

"Kacha!"

As the ground split open, mud flew everywhere, revealing some scattered bones. From the appearance of it and the extent of its decay, it was as though it had died for many years.

"The Five Elders of the Li River?"

Shi Yutong noticed an iron ring and exclaimed in shock.

"Mmm. They're incapable and boastful, and no one would've guessed that they would die here!"

Fang Yuan shook his head and continued forward.

"Bloop! Bloop!"

The deeper they ventured, the softer the ground. There were scattered pools of green water in the mud, and they were bubbling. As the bubbles burst, a smell of sulphur filled the air.

If a normal person or a 12th Gate martial artist were to be here, they might accidentally fall into the marsh and be swallowed alive.

Fortunately, Fang Yuan and Shi Yutong were extraordinary people. Every step they took, they appeared extremely stable.

After a while, a green lake appeared in front of both of them.

"Chi! Chi!"

At this place, the green fog became less concentrated and visibility was improved.

However, Shi Yutong's elemental energy bubble let out a screeching sound. The original shape that it used to be, the bubble became extremely deformed at this point in time.

"The further you'll go, the more you'll get!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head. "This is the furthest you can go. Wait for me here!"

Without waiting for Shi Yutong's reply, he had already arrived at the surface of the lake.

"Splash!"

As his right feet landed firmly on the surface of the lake, a layer of wave spread outwards. However, it did not succumb to his weight.

Walking on water!

Even Wu Zongs would find it hard to do this. Needless to say, this Poisonous Dragon Lake was not composed of normal lake water.

Fang Yuan appeared calm and arrived at the centre of the lake.

Releasing his magical energy, his face appeared as though he had understood something.

"Hiss!"

Suddenly, an extremely long but curved silhouette like a bow appeared under the surface of the lake!

Chapter 196: Water Dragon's Pearl

"Crash!"

With a hiss, a giant wave formed in the lake which was originally calm.

A huge shadow suddenly leapt out from the beneath the water surface and created a mace-like pillar of water which was aimed at Fang Yuan.

"Hmmm? What a beast, you still dare to attack me?"

Fang Yuan chided. 3 spiritual meridians suddenly surfaced in his body. "You...come out!"

"Rumble!"

He originally possessed an elemental power level of 2. With the addition of 3 levels, his [Essence] reached 30 points! With it being released all at once, the power was sufficient to topple mountains and overturn the seas [1]!

"Bang!"

Two gigantic hands made of elemental force appeared. With a strike of the claw, the pillar of water was dispersed.

At the same time, the other hand grasped the tail of the shadow and gave it a yank!

"Sou!"

Amidst the water droplets, a giant snake was tossed from the bottom of the lake onto the bank, creating a small tremor in the earth.

"This is..."

Shi Yutong's footwork was light and she retreated rapidly. Her face was full of shock as she look at the monstrous snake.

The snake was as thick as a water barrel and was covered in

emerald green scales. It was more than 30 metres long. More importantly, it had a set of small claws and it had a lump on its forehead. The snake was no ordinary snake.

"Dragons and snakes exist deep within the mountains... ancient snakes possess spiritual energy and can transform into a water dragon in 500 years!"

Shi Yutong's expression changed. "This is...this is a water dragon!"

Given the water dragon's spiritual aura, it was a stretch to classify it as a dragon.

"Its horn is not yet fully grown and cannot even be considered a young dragon. It is a snake monster at most!"

Fang Yuan rode a wave forward even though he appeared uninterested.

"Hiss!"

The giant snake[2] raised its body and held its head high, its pupils full of suspicion as it looked at its enemy. It hissed menacingly once again.

What made Shi Yutong flabbergasted was the fact that while the snake was extremely vicious, it appeared timid in front of Fang Yuan.

"It seems that you have achieved spiritual awareness. I do not want to kill as well. Be good and hand over that person's inheritance...and I will spare your life, how about that?"

Fang Yuan slowly moved forward as he tried to strike a deal with the snake.

"Hiss!"

The water dragon was enraged. It opened its jaws.

"Whoosh!"

An emerald green fog appeared and float towards Fang Yuan. Wherever the fog passed, the ground made a hissing sound and white smoke emerged. In a flash, the ground where the fog passed dissolved. It was apparent that the poison was unmatched.

The inheritance was important to the snake and it would go to great lengths to protect it!

"What a poisonous creature!"

Fang Yuan's expression remained unchanged. He heaved a sigh and shook his head. "It seems that this Poisonous Dragon Lake was created by you?"

The spiritual meridians on his body flashed and formed a multi-coloured armour which surrounded his entire body. The poisonous fog was unable to penetrate it and Fang Yuan dashed through the poisonous fog, appearing before the giant snake.

"Hiss!"

The snake hissed as it used its tail like a giant mace and struck down on Fang Yuan.

"Giant Eagle Claw!"

Fang Yuan's left hand formed the shape of a claw as he struck viciously.

Compared to the giant snake that was over 30 metres in length, Fang Yuan's small frame appeared to be like an ant's. However, with a strike from his claw, his elemental force ripped through the air, creating a tremor. The snake's tail was struck open and a large number of scales, stained with the snake's poisonous blood, crashed and shattered against the ground.

"Sect head..."

Shi Yutong saw the clash between the snake and Fang Yuan from the side and realized that although she was a Wu Zong, she was unable to help.

The prowess of the two of them was far beyond what she had imagined!

"This piece of land has many dangers. If the master is not here, the snake would not budge even if a few Wu Zongs were here..."

She swept the entire area with her eyes as suspicions clouded her beautiful facial features." It is just...where is the inheritance?"

The surroundings were filled with nothing but highly toxic marshes with a small lake.

"Unless it is at the bottom of the lake..."

A horrific thought appeared in Shi Yutong's mind.

If that was truly the case, one would have to dive into the poisonous lake water to search for the inheritance and at the same time, dodge the attacks of the snake. Even a Wu Zong would be heavily wounded or killed if he was not careful.

"Whoosh!"

Unknowingly, the surrounding was filled with white fog. It was thick and advanced and retreated, like a common fog in the mountains.

However, Shi Yutong knew the real danger of the fog and had experienced it before. She hastily retreated.

'This Bewildering Fog was the spiritual technique of the Sect Head...it is able to confound the senses of even a Wu Zong and'

Shi Yutong hastily fixed her eyes on the snake monster.

The fog surrounded Fang Yuan and the snake as they battled, and seeped into the scales of the snake. However, Shi Yutong was astounded as the movement of the snake did not appear to be affected by the Bewildering Fog.

"Hmmm?"

Fang Yuan also noticed that the fog had no effect on the snake as

well.

A blinding flash of light flashed in the lump on the snake's head.

The monstrous snake's resistance against the Bewildering Fog momentarily increased exponentially.

"According to the norm, while the snake is stronger than an ordinary Wu Zong, it is a spiritual beast and as such, its mind is simple. It should be easily affected by the fog..."

Fang Yuan looked on, deep in thought.

"Unless it possesses a treasure that protects it!"

"Hiss!"

As the light on its head started to flicker, the snake covered its entire body with the poisonous fog that it spat out. With a vicious flick of its tail, it tried to escape towards the lake.

Its preferred battlefield was still the bottom of the poisonous lake!

"Do you think that I only have these few tricks up my sleeves?"

Fang Yuan laughed, both hands making a grab for the snake. "Come back!"

"Whoosh!"

The surrounding fog condensed into chains and trapped the snake.

The snake possessed immense strength and as it struggled, many chains broke one by one. However, the broken chains started to recombine and restrict the movement of the snake.

"Ha!"

Fang Yuan muttered the incantation and a huge amount of white fog gathered before him, forming a wall of white fog.

"Go!"

An immense pressure blanketed the entire area.

He looked at the monstrous snake before sending the wall of white fog towards the snake. In an instant, it arrived before the snake.

"Hiss!"

The snake's scales were raised. It was restricted by the chains and was a huge target. There was no chance that it would be able to escape.

In that crucial moment, the lump on its head released a blinding light and cascaded over its body like a screen of water, protecting it.

"Crash!"

The next instant, the wall of white fog was shattered and there was a layer of fog covering the earth.

The blast from the impact was channelled outwards and even dispelled the poisonous fog that was nearby.

Shi Yutong's martial arts were raised to her limits. Her ears were ringing and she lost her orientation. It was only after a while before she became aware of the situation.

All she saw two long marks on the ground. She was only affected by the aftershock and her defense almost crumbled. She was flung back over 30 metres and almost sustain serious injuries!

"What happens to that giant snake?"

She lifted her gaze and saw that there was a large crater where the snake originally was. The lake water flooded into the crater and at the bottom of the crater was the giant snake. Its scales were shattered and a claw was broken. It looked very pitiful.

Fang Yuan stood before the snake and looked like a deity.

"There is no need to pretend. This small injury is nothing!"

He arrived before the snake and looked on mockingly.

He had barely finished his sentence when the snake glared at him with vicious intent and used its remaining claw to strike him.

"Crash!"

The earth shook and a claw print appeared on the ground.

"Sou!"

Fang Yuan transformed into a shadow and evaded the attack before arriving at the lump on the giant snake's head.

"The snake is strange mostly because of this lump!"

He was suspicious. 3 spiritual meridians appeared on his body and the sheen of his armour intensified.

"Hiss!"

The giant snake started to flail wildly as it tried to fling Fang Yuan from its head in order to protect the lump.

"Hehe..."

Fang Yuan remained rooted, his left hand transforming into a blade. His face looked indifferent as he brought the blade down.

"Pop!"

The blade flashed.

Amidst the shrieks of the monstrous snake, the lump on its forehead split open, its poisonous blood splattered onto Fang Yuan.

"Chh chh!"

Its poisonous properties were much more fearsome. Even though the defences were formed using the power of the spiritual meridians, the elemental force was dissipating at an alarming rate with a "chh" sound.

"Giant Eagle Claw!"

Fang Yuan took a deep breath before channelling his elemental force onto his left arm. He plunged his hand straight into the lump, towards the source of the light and closed his hand on a spherical object.

"Hiss!"

Beneath him, the giant snake started to thrash about and even slam its head on the ground.

"Come out!"

That spherical object appeared to be connected to multiple blood vessels like an old tree where its branches are intertwined.

Fang Yuan laughed and using his elemental power level 5, severed the meridians and yanked out the object!

"Chhh!"

A jet of blood spurted out as the giant snake gave a pitiful cry before falling limply to the ground as if all the bones in its body were removed.

"This is..."

Shi Yutong stepped forward and confirmed that the snake was gravely injured from its weak spiritual aura. She then looked at Fang Yuan who was gracefully floating down.

In his hand was a blue pearl which had some blood stains and threads of remnants on it.

"If my guess is correct, this pearl is a rare treasure. The snake might have possessed magical properties. However, it was only after being exposed to the pearl that the snake started to display signs of transformation..."

Fang Yuan wiped away the bloodstains to reveal the original look of the rare treasure.

It was the size of a fist and was blue. Flickering golden threads could be seen within the pearl.

"Dragon Pearl?"

Shi Yutong pondered before speaking the name of a rumoured legendary treasure before correcting herself. "No..."

"It is not a dragon pearl but a water dragon pearl. However, I suppose you can call it....."

Fang Yuan shook his head before turning to leave.

"Hmmm?"

Shi Yutong was startled. "Sect Head, What about the inheritance?"

She did not forget what Fang Yuan set out to get.

"It's here!"

Fang Yuan looked at the pearl in his hand and smiled.

The predecessor displayed originality by hiding the inheritance within the pearl. If Fang Yuan's magical energy was not extraordinary, he would not have realized it.

As for the snake, without the pearl, even if it was able to survive, its prowess would be greatly diminished and it would not be of much use.

[1] A Chinese idiom suggesting that the something, in this case, power was enormous.

[2] snake monster, snake and water dragon are used interchangeably to describe the water dragon based on the original text of the author.

Chapter 197: Golden Body

Deep in the night.

The room was bright like day as the lights filled the entire room with radiance.

This was the maximum potential of the Bright Moon Pearl. However, when the Bright Moon Pearl was compared to the object in Fang Yuan's hand, it paled in comparison. It was like passing of fish eyes for pearls.

"Dragon pearl, dragon pearl...in this world, there might indeed be dragons...if those exist, then water dragons and the likes exist as well!"

The world was vast. The mainland that Fang Yuan was living in was just a small, remote and desolate corner of the world.

Because of its location, the elemental energy of the heavens and earth was low, resulting in it becoming a forgotten place unworthy in the eyes of those in power.

However, things were different in the centre of the world, for example, where the Da Qian Empire was located.

Fang Yuan stared at the pearl in his hand.

A blue light constantly swirled around and encompassed the pearl with a brilliance that was able to captivate onlookers.

"This does not just contain the water dragon's energy, it is very much like the jade and contains a spiritual will as well!"

Fang Yuan closed his eyes and channeled his immense spiritual will into the pearl.

"Roar!"

Within the pearl, there was chaos. Suddenly, a dragon's shadow appeared. It had a snake's body and a fish tail, with a single horn on its head. The dragon had 4 limbs with 3 claws each. It was a

standard green water dragon!

It witnessed Fang Yuan's spiritual will and was momentarily enraged. With a roar, it pounced on Fang Yuan.

"Hmmmph! You dare to be mischievous with such a small water dragon aura?"

Fang Yuan's spiritual will rumbled like a passing storm.

"Boom!"

Multiple giant streaks of lightning appeared and struck the water dragon.

The green water dragon gave a pitiful cry before it dissolved into purple energy which was dispelled.

"Reveal yourself!"

Fang Yuan's spiritual will continued to probe and amidst the chaos, a string of golden words appeared.

'My name is Nie Kuang, from the central province of Da Qian. I used the Hundred Poison Golden Body to cause chaos in the world. The future generations must continue to spread my name and let the world know that my way is neverending...'

The words were clustered together and the beginning was an autobiography.

"Nie Kuang?"

After a while, Fang Yuan opened his eyes and kept the pearl. "This Hundred Poison Golden Body is really so powerful?"

The inheritance within the pearl was a martial arts manual.

Fang Yuan was disappointed as the technique was not like the Da Qian Giant Spiritual Technique which talked about opening meridians and achieving the Divine Body.

At his peak, Nie Kuang was just an ordinary Wu Zong who had not opened his spiritual meridians.

However, he had the blood of a spiritual knight in the Elemental Opening Realm in his hands!

It was because of this that Nie Kuang had no choice but to travel far away to a secluded area to escape from trouble.

"An ordinary Wu Zong who managed to kill a spiritual knight in the Elemental Opening Realm?"

To Fang Yuan, that was like an ant biting an elephant to its death!

"If the Hundred Poison Golden Body was like what he described, I suppose that there is still a possibility!"

According to what Nie Kuang described, he came from a small martial arts sect and possessed an inheritance of his own. He had an ancestor who was able to breakthrough to become a Wu Zong, but due to the shortcomings of his technique, was unable to reach the Meridian Opening Realm. The ancestor was unhappy and later on, made a vow to create a technique able to rival that of a meridian opening technique.

This ancestor's martial arts prowess was not up to mark. However, his skills lie in medicine and poison. After toiling for his entire life, he finally developed a technique that became the Hundred Poison Golden Body later on.

This technique used all types of objects with poisonous properties and combined it with the flesh of the martial artist, bringing out their hidden potential and increase the strength of the body. While the martial artist would not be able to enter the next realm, his strength would be comparable to that of a Wu Zong who had entered the Meridian Opening Realm. Truth be told, this was a technique that was only focused on strengthening the body.

Although the objects used were very rare, this method was viable. According to Nie Kuang, although he had never managed to open his spiritual meridians, his body was so strong that at his

peak, he had an elemental power level of 7, unable to be wounded by swords and spears. His body was impenetrable by fire and water and even the spiritual spells of a spiritual knight in the Elemental Opening Realm was nothing to him!

That was something really impressive!

"The Giant Spiritual Technique of the Yang Family can only increase the elemental power level by 1 and it is considered impressive. This Hundred Poison Golden Body is able to increase the elemental power by 6 levels?"

Fang Yuan stroked his chin. "This is not bad indeed. It is just that..."

If this technique had no shortcomings, everyone in the Da Qian Empire would be practising this technique. How is it possible that not even the descendants know about this technique?

With a look at the prescription required, Fang Yuan was able to guess the reason.

"Jade Bone Dark Flower? Heavenly Fragrant Bone Burning Grass..."

Fang Yuan had never heard of these poisonous plants before.

There was one ingredient that he had heard of, Nine Festival Jade Sweet Flag, which was an earth grade spiritual plant!

"This technique requires too many resources and the results are not directly proportional to the resources used!"

Fang Yuan shook his head as he figured out the shortcoming of this technique.

While the technique was indeed strong, it required a terrifying amount of resources. The resources used to nurture Nie Kuang was sufficient to train up a few spiritual knights in the Elemental Opening Realm and Wu Zongs in the Meridian Opening Realm!

Furthermore, a Wu Zong in the Meridian Opening Realm need

not be afraid of this technique. After opening the spiritual meridians and attaining the Divine Body, the physical body would similarly be strengthened and become more powerful than using the Hundred Poison Golden Body.

With this comparison, those sects that still trained the disciples with the Hundred Poison Golden Body technique could be considered foolish.

"Based on how this person spoke and acted, this is a technique spread and used by an evil sect...to swindle and forcefully take what belongs to others to benefit themselves..."

Fang Yuan was able to largely guess Nie Kuang's history based on this technique.

"It would be hard to gather the ingredients and undergo the 1st Refining Stage here!"

Fang Yuan stroked his chin. "However, this might be possible for me...!"

This technique did not require the opening of the spiritual meridians and instead focused on the training of the physical body. To an ordinary Wu Zong, this technique was of no use.

However, Fang Yuan had incredible botanical skills and as such, he did not give up.

He knew the advantages of strengthening his physical body as he had used rough techniques to breakthrough to become a Wu Zong.

"The Hundred Poison Golden Body is split into the 1st, 10th and the 100th Refining stage. Every stage requires the use of poisonous objects...after the 1st Refining Stage, the physical body will gain an increase in 1 level of elemental power. The body will then be impervious to hundreds of poisons. Nie Kuang was in the Tenth Refining Stage. As a result, his body was tough as steel and resistant to Elemental Opening spiritual spells and his elemental power level increased by another 5 levels!"

"As for the Hundredth Refining Stage, it is just a conjecture. Not even Nie Kuang's ancestor was able to achieve it. It was not because he was unable to learn the technique but rather, the resources needed was too much!"

Fang Yuan clenched his teeth and made up his mind.

"I do not need to rely on the Tenth or the Hundredth Refining Stage. However, it would be good to have another set of technique for self-defense on my road to Da Qian. I will practice this technique before making my way there!"

To him, it was a bonus for him to obtain this Hundred Poison Golden Body technique.

...

As Fang Yuan was the emperor in this area, people would tend to whatever he needed.

When he returned to the capital of Secluded Country, the whole country was abuzz with activities when they received the news of what Fang Yuan required.

All sorts of common, uncommon poisonous objects from across the world and even from the plains were sent to the palace.

"The 1st Refining Stage is the easiest stage of this technique!"

Within the palace, a layer of green fog lingered, taking on the shape of a dragon and a snake. The green fog was trapped by the spiritual inscriptions at the side.

Fang Yuan stared at the multiple cauldrons in front of him, each holding medicinal liquids which gave out fragrances that were able to captivate onlookers.

However, they were all poisonous!

There were snow mountain spiders, green bamboo five-paced vipers, 3-eyed peacock guts and spirit-chasing scorpions...

In addition, there were also Cruel Sky Flower, Earth-rotting grass

and Intoxicated Orchids...

There were all sorts of known and unknown poisonous objects that were first refined multiple times before being placed in the cauldron and the process continued. An ordinary person would surely die when he comes into contact with the poison! Even a Wu Zong might be poisoned to death!

"Furthermore, the required ingredients were not considered too precious and substitutes could be found as well..."

Fang Yuan was a famous doctor and after practicing, he was able to carry out the process easily.

"Rumble! Rumble!"

After an hour, the fragrance of the medicine started to vanish and Fang Yuan extinguished the flames. The liquid in the furnace had become congruent and become a black paste.

Fang Yuan nodded his head as his smile expressed his joy. Without hesitation, he walked forward and applied the poisonous paste onto his body.

"Oh..."

When the paste came into contact with his skin, there was a sensation of pain and numbing itch which slowly seeped into his bones. It was as if there were thousands of ants climbing all over his body and biting him.

Fang Yuan had experienced this sensation multiple times before. He furrowed his brows and bore with the pain. His body absorbed the poisonous properties and stimulated his potential.

The technique to attain the Hundred Poison Golden Body was crude and easily managed.

"Of course, the most important element of this technique happened to be the Water Dragon Pearl!"

After a while, the medicinal properties were slowly absorbed and

Fang Yuan's skin took on a bronze hue.

The court was made mostly of rocks and in the middle, a large hole was carved out and filled with boiled medicine.

In the middle, the Water Dragon Pearl bobbed up and down, giving off threads of blue light.

"This is a true inheritance, with a technique and an accompanying treasure to train with! What a pity this is only the First Refining Stage!"

Without hesitation and fear, Fang Yuan removed his clothing and jumped straight into the pool.

"Whoosh!"

The poisonous liquid, combined with the boiling temperature made Fang Yuan feel like he was stabbed a thousand times over.

"Good!"

Fang Yuan gritted his teeth as he felt his elemental force surging forward towards a barrier.

"Bang!"

After a while, there was a roar of a dragon and the Water Dragon Pearl in the pool burst open, transformed into a fine powder and entered Fang Yuan's body.

"Roar!"

Fang Yuan's nose trembled, emitting a roar similar to a dragon's. He suddenly leapt out of the pool and looked at his hands, his expression jubilant. "I have successfully attained the First Refining Stage!"

Chapter 198: The Journey

"Are there any changes to my stats window?"

After successfully breaking through the 1st Refining Stage, Fang Yuan looked at his stats window:

Name: Fang Yuan

Essence: 36

Spirit: 30

Magic: 9.9

Profession: Dream Master

Cultivation: [Dream-building Master (Peak of Elemental Gathering Realm)], Wu Zong (Third Meridian)

Technique: [Giant Eagle Metal Body Technique (Grade 4) (1%)], Bewildering Spell, Shadowstep, Hundred Poison Golden Body (1st Refining)

Skill: [Medicine (Level 3)], [Botany (Level 5)]"

"Hundred Poison Golden Body - A secret form of martial art, and is based on using extreme poison to trigger the body's potential, increasing physical strength. Currently at the 1st Refining Stage, and gained one elemental power level. The physical condition of the body is strengthened, and body is now resistant to all types of poison!"

"Resistant to all types of poison..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his chin. "I'm afraid the 'all types' of poison only include the common types of poison. If I encounter spiritual poison or deadly poison... I might still succumb to it, even if I'm at the 10th Refining Stage or 100th Refining Stage!"

He looked at his own body.

After successfully breaking through the refining stage, his

became slightly taller and his muscles were more defined. His skin was tight and had a bronze hue.

With any movement, his joints crackled, releasing an immense amount of energy.

"It seems that I will no longer need to use my elemental force and just use my physical body to be still able to defeat a Wu Zong!"

Fang Yuan clenched his fists tightly, and there was satisfaction in his eyes.

"I can leave the affairs of the country and the sect to the ministers and elders..."

He walked out of the palace and passed down a message to the ministers and elders, reminding them to behave in his absence. After which, he called for the Red-Eyed White King Bird and flew back to Qingye City.

This was where he started all of it, and therefore felt different from other places.

The secluded valley gave him the most memorable memories.

He slowly walked to the opening of the valley.

"Who's that? Eh? King!?"

A few martial artists carrying long swords came out. As they saw Fang Yuan, they were all in shock and quickly knelt down.

"Rumble!"

As the news of Fang Yuan's arrival spread, the entire secluded valley was in chaos. From housekeepers to the servants, everyone paid their respects to Fang Yuan.

"So much time has passed since I was here!"

The secluded valley appeared the same as before but had its differences now. Fang Yuan shook his head. He turned around and left.

The old secluded valley would forever be a memory and would never come back.

"Those that are stuck in the past will never have a future!"

Fang Yuan rubbed the Red-Eyed White King Bird's head. "Old White, I'll see you!"

The secluded valley, secluded country and the entire mainland, was but a small part of his life's journey.

He had to start on his new journey.

"In my life, I must live spectacularly and find the path to eternity, as well as... the path to the past!"

He was still longing for the world he once lived in his past life.

"Chirp! Chirp!"

The bird seemingly understood Fang Yuan's determination. As it flew up, it circled the sky and let out a sorrowful chirp...

...

The plains in Yuan territory.

Since three years ago when Fang Yuan split up the 8 kings, Yuan Country was left in internal conflict and turmoil from that day onwards.

The countries from the South worked together to sow discord among the 8 of them and constantly kept each of their influence in check.

Although there might be instances of accidents, like the death of the 1st Prince Ba Tu, generally speaking, everything was rather stable.

The people living in the North finally enjoyed a period of peace.

The land and sky were vast.

Fang Yuan quietly came to the North without picking up too much attention. He bought a white horse and galloped straight

through Yuan Country, arriving at the Northern Territories. He came to the rift valley near the Sunset Division.

As he walked in, he lit up a purple incense.

A mild fragrance of sandalwood filled the air. There was a hint of spirituality which slowly dissipated.

This was a present he had received from Purple Dream. She had told him that if he ever lit this incense, she would be able to detect it and would appear to meet him.

"Where did she go in the past 3 years..."

Fang Yuan tied the horse and started to pitch his tent. As he prepared dinner, he thought of Purple Dream's face and let out a smile. "Her seductiveness would bring trouble to whichever city she may visit..."

With the Mountain River Pearl, travelling had become much more convenient for him.

Since he had decided to go on a long journey, he had to prepare enough food.

Slowly, he started to retrieve charcoal, a metal wok and a structure as he started to cook rice.

He was using premium Flame Jade Rice and the rice grains were huge. As he cooked, the fragrance of the rice filled the air.

His horse started to sniff the air and stared at Fang Yuan, as it started to salivate.

Although it was only a normal horse, it knew that if it could eat spiritual food, it would be beneficial to it, and it might even give it spiritual awareness.

"What a clever beast!"

Fang Yuan jokingly chided.

No matter how wasteful and luxurious he was, he would not feed

an average horse with spiritual food.

If this was the Heavenly Horse from the plains, he might consider.

Not long after, the spiritual rice was cooked and the smell was invigorating. As the rice glowed a beautiful red, the sunset on the plains was a calming orange, and the entire scene gave Fang Yuan a different feel.

He took out his chopsticks and started to eat his dinner heartily.

Originally, he should have tried his hands on catching a wild goat to eat, but he was too pampered already. Unless it was a spiritual goat, he would not even bother to try it.

"Da da!"

"Da da!"

As his ears twitched, Fang Yuan looked towards the horizon, where the sky and the plains met.

Not long after, a few black dots appeared on the horizon. In a matter of minutes, they came closer and Fang Yuan could identify two waves of horses, all of which had a person riding on them. There were lesser people in the first wave in front, as though they were running for their lives. The wave of horses behind seemed to be giving chase as they shot a few arrows in an attempt to kill.

"War between countries? Personal feud?"

Fang Yuan did not care.

Everything was fair in this world.

He was a person who wouldn't care much, to begin with. Therefore, he didn't have any thoughts on helping them this time.

After all, the weak might not be kind people deserving of help.

However, this time, he was not the one looking for trouble. Instead, trouble was looking for him.

The black smoke, fire and tent were too obvious to be disregarded.

Those people who were escaping were subconsciously running towards the direction of Fang Yuan.

"Get hold of them!"

"Don't let them run!"

The people behind shouted as though Fang Yuan was already on their side. Or rather, they did not care much and shot a few more arrows.

"This bunch..."

Speechless, Fang Yuan grabbed a handful of rocks and exerted a force on in his right hand.

"Kacha!"

There was a huge crack on the rocks. As they exploded, they became many pebbles.

"Get... lost!"

He waved his right hand.

"Chi! Chi!"

The pebbles flew extremely quickly towards the horses. In mid-air, they rubbed against each other, producing sparks and a screeching sound. It was as though they were as strong as arrows.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Blood was flying everywhere as the pebbles hit the people on the horses.

Regardless if they were running or chasing, all of them ended up the same.

Furthermore, even the huge horses started to bleed as they were hit by the pebbles. Both parties were in chaos. As they heard Fang Yuan's loud and commanding voice, they started to scramble in all

directions and did not dare to remain near him.

"Mmm! Not too bad!"

After chasing away the flies, Fang Yuan dusted his hands with satisfaction.

He did not even use his elemental force this time. It was purely his physical strength. Compared to elemental force, he had much more control of it, and he could last longer.

As for the people of the Yuan Country, Fang Yuan's demonic actions would have left a deep impression on them.

...

"Little Prince! That's not a person! It's a monster, a demon!"

Among the people who escaped, a middle-aged cavalry general reported to a young man. "Stay away from him! As far as possible!"

"I..."

His young man was dressed like royalty. His face was pale, as though he could not recover after witnessing hell.

After awakening from his trance, he held his horse. "No! I want to look for him! This is for revenge, for our people! Even if he has the power of a demon, I still hope we can..."

This cavalry general had a lot of experience and guessed that the person was the rumoured legendary warrior from the South. However, the fact that the person would kill so easily worried him. After much thought, he said, "Little Prince, you have royal blood and are our only hope. How can we risk it? We have heard that that demon is ruthless! If you trust me, then let A Yeqi and myself be your messenger to talk to him!"

Even though this Little Prince reaffirmed that he was not afraid, he was actually fearful deep inside. After much hesitation, he agreed to the cavalry general's request.

Little did that know that Fang Yuan was there waiting for a

person. Afterwards, he would head North, and would never come back.

...

"Purple Dream, you're here!"

After chasing away those people, Fang Yuan waited for a while. At the corner of his eye, he could see a shadow and he smiled.

"I've come late, but I've managed to see a show!"

Purple Dream looked exactly the same as she was 3 years ago. It was as though the heavens were bias towards her, and left her with no signs of ageing.

She looked at Fang Yuan with her mesmerizing eyes and sighed. "Is your heart made of steel?"

"I am just focused on what I need to do!"

Fang Yuan shrugged his shoulders. "On the plains, divisions and tribes come and go. If I have to care about every single detail, I'd have to forget about my own cultivation! As for now, I've not missed the time, right?"

"Nope. This is the time where the chilly winds are the weakest!"

Purple Dream nodded her head and started to whistle.

A pure white spiritual beast with a little horn on its head started to run towards them. It was like a unicorn, and it looked at Fang Yuan, as though it was guarding against him.

"Mm? This horse is not too bad!"

Fang Yuan nodded his head and kicked his own horse.

Although he had carefully handpicked his horse, it could never compare against a spiritual beast! As his own horse became triggered by the spiritual aura around, it became fearful.

Chapter 199: Icy Gorge

"Whooo! Whooo!"

As the North wind blew, the elements were harsh.

Only a white scene could be seen. Water froze into ice and the flying snow was sharp like a knife. It was like a blizzard hell!

This is the chilly winds? Who would've thought that this would be how the extreme North of the plains look like!"

Fang Yuan was laying on the unihorned beast lazily with Purple Dream. As he inhaled, he could smell the mild fragrance from Purple Dream, and a few strips from her robe caressed his face playfully.

What happened to the white horse? It was already frozen to death a few hours in the chilly winds. Normal beasts could not handle the harsh elements here.

Even Purple Dream's Unihorn Beast was releasing a white glow from its horn, and the glow covered its body.

Not just that, the hairs on its hooves stood on its ends, resembling a huge vacuum. Only then could it traverse on the snow without obstruction.

'To be able to do this meant that it could also walk on water. There was a rumour in Xia Country that there was once an outstanding general with a pet that was able to walk on water. On many occasions, it rescued the general from danger, and was known as a lucky animal...'

Ultimately, it felt different travelling with a beauty. Fang Yuan felt a little different in his heart.

Purple Dream wasn't asleep yet. Suddenly, she turned around and in a clear voice, exclaimed. "This is only the outer boundary of the chilly winds. In order to reach Da Qian Empire, we need to go

through the heart of the extreme North. I have already led you around the blizzard. However, you will be by yourself in the depths of the plains, against the wild animals."

"You... Are you not going to Da Qian to look for your master?"

Fang Yuan could hear Purple Dream's intention from her voice and asked.

"Master... Are you talking about my Almighty Father?"

Purple Dream laughed pitifully. "You will never be able to accomplish what he had done. I pray for Him and tell Him about all my worries. He has always been with me!"

Fang Yuan remained silent.

He felt that this lady in front of him had displayed the signs of becoming a mad follower of a cult.

'Will a dream master end up a God?'

He felt that something was not right. It could be because that dream master had passed on, which led to Purple Dream having these thoughts.

"Whooo! Whooo!"

The Northern winds were extremely strong.

A shadow appeared in front. It slowly became bigger and bigger, and finally, it took on the shape of a huge gorge.

No!

This was not a normal gorge; it was the gate to the Heavens!

Two icy cliffs stood on each side, and they were tall as they blocked out more than half of the sky. He could not see the end.

"You must be careful. In the icy gorge, there are a lot of dangers. I should put it this way. It is a whole new world altogether..."

Purple Dream dismounted from the horse and took a step back. "I can only bring you thus far!"

"Many thanks!"

Fang Yuan rubbed his nose.

If Purple Dream did not help him, he might have wasted too much effort trying to circumvent the blizzard and to locate this place.

"I hope that you can find what you are looking for!"

Purple Dream smiled, turned around and leapt on her horse. In an instant, she disappeared into the snow.

"The dream people... they're interesting!"

Fang Yuan looked in the direction that she went, smiled, and turned around to face the icy gorge.

"Whooo! Whoo!"

As the chilly winds blew, the coldness within the gorge was extreme due to the fact that it was paved with two icy cliffs on each side.

Fang Yuan almost lost his footing to the wind. Fortunately, he was prepared and he exerted a force on his legs, as they held onto the ground like roots.

Suddenly, a black shadow whizzed past him, as though it was fired from a bow pulled back all the way.

"Mm?"

With his right hand, he caught the object. Immediately, there was a 'kacha' sound and ice crystals were fragmented. All that was left on his hand was snow.

At the entrance of the gorge, the extreme wind could even blow icicles as though they were arrows. This was scarier than any other type of traps!

"Icicles?! As this stage, even martial artists of 4 Heavenly Gates would not be able to escape!"

Fang Yuan looked at this hand and let out a cold breath.

His reaction time, defence, and the speed of his hand was already at a stage which Wu Zongs could only dream of.

This was only one icicle. If there were many flying at the same time, even Wu Zongs would be troubled by it, and might even be pierced to death!

At this place, any wounds sustained would lead to the loss of one's martial arts, and even the blood flowing from the wound would freeze!

"I was fortunate to have strengthened my body before I came here. Reaching the stage of 1st Refining Stage is already many many times stronger than a normal Wu Zong!"

There was a white flash!

Suddenly, in Fang Yuan's hands were many metal chains. At the tip of the chains were long nails that were thick. The entire thing was heavy and it reflected a silvery black.

All of this was made from Hundred Casted Iron. In the normal world, it could be made into magical weapons, but to Fang Yuan, it was just a tool.

"Ha! Go!"

As he raised his right hand, he exerted an immense amount of force. The chain, which was a few hundred pounds heavy, spun into a black ray of light. As he flung it straight ahead, it broke through the icy surface and struck on the stone wall, stuck.

"Go!"

As he looked at the entrance of the gorge, he walked ahead without hesitation.

"Whoosh! Whoosh!"

The freezing cold wind was stinging! Furthermore, there were thousands of icicles flying through the wind this time!

Nearer to the entrance, the icicles were more concentrated, and it flew at an astonishing speed!

"Pa! Pa! Pa! Pa!"

Fang Yuan retrieved a gigantic metal shield from the Mountain River Pearl and shielded himself. In an instant, he could hear the icicles pelting on his shield, like how raindrops would land on a banana leaf.

As the icicles hit his shield, they shattered and soon after, a thick layer of ice formed on this shield.

The bone-piercing chill of the ice slowly spread through the metal shield.

Even Wu Zongs might freeze to death in such an intense cold!

"My physical body is slowly becoming unable to withstand the cold!"

As he focused, three spiritual meridians appeared on his body. They transformed into a layer of armour and covered his body.

"Weng!"

With the glow, the previous cold that he felt was mitigated.

Not just that, his palms became burning hot like a furnace. As the shield conducted the heat from his palms, there was visible steam coming from the front of the shield as the ice started to melt and evaporate.

"Again!"

Fang Yuan walked to the marking which he had placed earlier on, pulled out the metal nail and swung the chain once more.

"Whoosh!"

The black glow was like a black dragon, and once again, the metal chain was stuck firmly to the stone wall.

"At this stage... Even Meridian Opening Wu Zongs might not be

able to pass through this place safely!"

At the entrance of the icy gorge where the wind came from, the air current was extremely strong and the air was chilly. Fang Yuan bit his teeth. "This is only the first stage to overcome on my way to Da Qian Empire. I now know why many died here. Firstly, there is no one around here to help. Secondly, not anyone can successfully pass through the perilous obstacles!"

His master and Yang Fan were both dream masters at the Illusionary Divine stage and were both extremely capable.

Even Nie Kuang did the impossible. With his 10th Refining Stage of his Hundred Poison Golden Body, he could use brute force to force his way through.

Other than these three people, normal Meridian Opening Wu Zongs, or even Elemental Opening spiritual knights would retreat in fear when faced with this natural threat.

"Rumble! Rumble!"

Another cold and extreme wind came. With the extreme pressure on the metal shield, there was a crack appearing!

"What in the world!"

Fang Yuan focused. As he released and recovered the metal chain in quick succession, he rushed his way through.

Even a metal shield casted from Hundred Casted Iron could not withstand against this. Even if he had confidence in his own body, he should have guessed that he would not be able to hold any longer.

"Ping!"

After walking a few yards forward, there was a huge mess of icicles, icy rocks and icy boulders falling straight down at him.

"Dang!"

Fang Yuan raised his metal shield, knocking one of the icy

boulders away. His arm was left in pain, and he quickly used his elemental force to recover his arm.

"Run!"

As his eyes glittered, he started to use his Lightness skill and Shadowstep. Avoiding the icy boulders, it was an arduous task to traverse within the icy gorge.

Occasionally, he would encounter boulders which cannot be avoided, and he would use the metal shield to block it with brute force. As for the flying icicles, he could no longer care about them and could only use his physical body to endure.

Fortunately for him, he was well built. His Iron Skin Technique together with his First Refining Stage body was indeed an effective combination.

If it was a normal Wu Zong who came, his body would have already been pierced a few bloody holes.

"Not just defence wise, but a normal Wu Zong's elemental force would not be enough as well!"

Fang Yuan sighed. Suddenly, his hair stood on its ends. He could feel danger approaching, and suddenly he was ambushed, causing his Mind Palace to shake.

"Rumble!"

At the peak of the cliff, a huge icy mountain started to crumble. The base of it started to crack up, and like a pillar, it smashed its way down, covering the entire sky in the process.

"What the... f*ck!"

Fang Yuan's eyes opened wide. Seeing the shadow engulfing him in, he quickly threw the shield away and ran for his life.

'If I were to be smashed by the icy mountain, I would have zero chance of staying alive!'

As his hands held on to the metal chain, he quickly advanced. He

started to harness all the rough breathing techniques he could as he could not care less about the icicles hitting him. Under his elemental force's protection, most of the icicles were shattered in an instant.

"Whooo!"

"Whooo!"

As the shadow grew bigger, the air current which was initially there was starting to become obstructed as well.

"What a joke! I don't want to end up as a popsicle! Shadowstep!"

With all his strength, Fang Yuan swung the metal chain and advanced a few yards at once. His face was flushed and his eyes were bloodshot.

"Kacha!"

As he leapt out, it was as though he had escaped into another territory. The intense winds were now much milder than before.

"Since the middle of the gorge is much wider than the entrance of the gorge, the strength of the wind would naturally be reduced!"

It was the perfect opportunity! Without hesitation, Fang Yuan used his Shadowstep, and on every layer of ice, he left a deep footprint.

"Rumble!"

The icy mountain crashed into the ground without any reservation, causing a mini earthquake in the vicinity. Shattered pieces of ice and rocks started to fly in all directions.

"Whoosh!"

A shadow flew past.

Fang Yuan's body escaped the area which the icy mountain crashed into. However, he was still hit by many shattered pieces of ice, and as the elemental force protecting him weakened, many

shrapnels of ice struck his back.

"Ah!"

He let out an exclamation. However, he continued to move forward and used the force from the flying shrapnel to further propel him forward. Finally, he reached a safe area.

"Phew!"

After crossing a crack on the ground, Fang Yuan looked at the pile of mess behind him and felt regretful.

"This... Is this the inside of the icy gorge?"

After entering the icy gorge completely, there was a completely new world in front of him.

Although the surroundings and the ground were still covered in ice and snow and were extremely tough, this was a whole new world. The intense winds were much milder, and not far from him he could feel the spiritual aura of a living thing.

"There is indeed a new world after going through hell!"

Fang Yuan let out a satisfactory sigh and his eyes glittered. "Da Qian Empire... I'm coming!"

Chapter 200: Giant Tiger

It was a whole new world within the icy gorge.

Fang Yuan sprinted 10 miles ahead until he could no longer see the walls of the icy gorge. Only then did he raised his head up and looked at the bright sun.

The surroundings were a scenic ice world. The chilly winds were no longer there.

There was no more thick layer of snow on the ground, nor there was unbreakable ice. Instead, it was a white coloured kind of soil.

There were scattered moss and wild grasses around. Although they appeared small and weak, they were, in fact, the only things with life here.

"What a world this is in the middle of the icy gorge..."

Fang Yuan sighed. He was extremely clear now.

Although it was not visible from where he was, if he were to walk by the sides of the gorge, he could see the cliff walls which extended into the clouds!

This enormous icy gorge was like a wine pot. The ends were small, but the middle was extremely wide. Because of this, a unique ecosystem was formed inside of it.

"I must pass through this icy gorge in order to reach the Da Qian Empire. If I walk around and make a detour outside of the icy gorge, I would not only waste too much energy, but the chilly winds could tire out even the strongest Elemental Opening spiritual knight!"

The icy gorge was too deep. Fang Yuan trotted ahead for quite a distance.

The day seemed long. Finally, the sun set and nightfall arrived, but it was unbelievably short.

After going deeper and deeper, there seemed to be more forms of life. There were a few groups of trees and the appearance of a translucent white ant.

"Such are the miracles of life!"

Fang Yuan squatted down and examined the ants; he was filled with emotions.

With the flick of this fingers, a stream of energy was released. The ground broke and as a hole appeared, a scorpion the size of a palm crawled out.

This scorpion's body was like jade. It was glistening and raised both of its pincers. It was also wavering its tail as it looked at Fang Yuan.

"Icy Jade Scorpion?"

Fang Yuan smiled as he identified it.

In order to train his Hundred Poison Golden Body, he needed these types of poison. Without any reservations, he flicked his finger once more, this time hitting the back of the scorpion.

Although this poison was potent, the scorpion was still useless in front of Fang Yuan. Immediately, it crippled onto the ground and was no longer moving.

As a white glow flashed, the Mountain River Pearl took in the poisonous creature within it, as though it was not afraid of the poison spreading within it.

This spiritual tool that was able to store things brought extreme convenience to Fang Yuan. He could travel anytime he wanted.

Seeing the sky slowly darken, he took out his tent and cooking equipment and started to cook his spiritual rice to replenish a day's worth of energy.

...

The icy gorge was huge, it was enormous!

Fang Yuan's endurance was already greater than a thousand-mile horse. However, he had already walked for seven days in a row, without the end in sight.

Furthermore, there were occasions where he got lost due to his inexperience.

"Even the sun's position is wrong?"

Fang Yuan raised his head up in disappointment. He started to suspect if this sun was the same sun as the one in the outside world.

At this point in time, he had walked into a forest. The trees here were not very tall, and on the outside, they were coated with a pure white. There were even layers of frost on some of the leaves. However, there was no spiritual energy around, which meant that these plants were normal plants which evolved special traits.

"Whoosh!"

In the grass patch, a dark shadow was startled as it flew forward like an arrow.

Fang Yuan threw some rocks from his hand.

"Whoosh!"

As the rock sparked after coming in contact with the air, it flew straight like a bullet and hit the shadow.

"Chi!"

A gush of blood spurted out as the black shadow fell onto the ground. It was a snow rabbit.

"Chi! Chi!"

Fang Yuan was delighted. "Not too bad! We'll have roasted rabbit meat for dinner!"

This snow rabbit was native to the icy gorge. There was a hint of spiritual energy from it and it was not a normal species. It would

leave no traces behind as it moved, and its meat was delicious.

How did he know all these? He had once encountered a snow rabbit before.

"The deeper I go, the more concentrated the vegetation, and the larger the size of the animals would be..."

Fang Yuan rubbed his nose and started to think. "Could it be because I have traversed through the pole? And that after becoming extreme, the life forms would revert? This place resembles the poles of Earth. Is this proof? No... I don't even know if the world is a sphere or not... This might just be a natural phenomenon!"

His knowledge of Geography was not in-depth enough in his past life, and he was too lazy to mull over this problem. Without thinking much, he pitched his tent and roasted the rabbit meat.

Since he brought along salt and seasoning with him, the roasted rabbit was extremely fragrant, and anyone who could smell it would salivate.

After roasting it, Fang Yuan pulled out its leg. His nose was filled with the roasted fragrance of the rabbit, and all of its oil and essence was fully absorbed into the meat. The skin was perfectly roasted and the meat inside was tender. Together with the fact that the snow rabbit's meat was naturally good, this was an unforgettable feast.

"Munch! Munch!"

Fang Yuan had a huge appetite as he started devouring half of the roasted rabbit.

Just as he finished savouring the first half and was eyeing on the other half, there was a roar of a tiger coming from the forest.

This was the natural order of the world; there must be a predator within the woods!

Accompanying the roar of the tiger, a strong gust of wind blew as the grass and trees swayed. Naturally, it was a threatening feel.

"This is..."

Fang Yuan scanned around and noticed the culprit behind all these; it was a huge tiger.

However, this tiger had a pure white fur. Its skin was glowing and appeared to be larger than the average tiger by two or three times. There were black stripes on its white skin and it was extremely beautiful. Of course, its most defining feature was its two sharp fangs resembling sharp icicles. It protruded out of the tiger's mouth and was clearly visible from outside.

"Sword toothed Tiger? No! Frost Sword Toothed Tiger!"

Fang Yuan started to give it names. "What a spiritual beast! Looking at it, it seems that it is almost about to achieve a breakthrough to Wu Zong! If it was on the mainland, the red-eyed white king bird might not be able to take it down!"

The bloodshot eyes of the white tiger stared at the half-rabbit in Fang Yuan's eyes as it started to salivate. Obviously, it was attracted by the roasted rabbit.

"Seriously..."

Fang Yuan started to laugh. Looking at the size of the huge tiger, he suddenly rubbed his chin. "Alright! I was still troubled by the fact that I don't have a ride, and here you come!"

"Roar!"

The white tiger did not understand what Fang Yuan was saying, but since it was spiritual, it could tell his intentions from his expression.

Seeing Fang Yuan's mocking face, it was infuriated and it pounced towards Fang Yuan!

"Rumble!"

The paws of the tiger met with the claws of Fang Yuan, but there was only one result.

"Roar!"

Its body swung as its tail was like a chain.

"Chi!"

In mid-air, there was a shadow flying once again.

"Haha... I believe this is all you've got!"

Amidst the laughter, The shadows flew about in mid-air. As Fang Yuan's body was revealed, his right hand grabbed in the mid-air, catching the tiger's tail. "Up you go!"

Fang Yuan only had the capability of a Wu Zong in his physical body. After exclaiming, the white tiger rolled on the floor and it was thoroughly embarrassed.

"Roar! Roar!"

With the flick of its tail, it flipped itself upright. It was triggered and became more ferocious than before. As it exhaled a cold breath, its paws struck forward with the intent to kill.

"I'm not even afraid of the storm at the entrance of the icy gorge. What makes you think I'm going to be afraid of your frost?"

Fang Yuan had a taunting look in his eyes as he reached out both of his hands.

"Kacha!"

As the frost landed on his body, the energy around him deflected it, leaving no trace of it behind.

The incoming paws were firmly grasped by him in his hands.

As the white tiger shook, there was a hint of fear in its eyes.

Although the human in front of it was small, it had the strength of a reckless and brute beast!

"Lie down!"

Fang Yuan started to become playful and executed a perfect swing from the back. As his wrist flicked, he flipped the white tiger above his head and it landed squarely on the ground.

"Rumble!"

There was a giant hole in the ground and soil flew in all directions.

It was a shocking scene to behold.

A small human could actually playfully take down the king of the forest! What strength and power!

"Mmmmmm!"

The white tiger flipped itself upright and ran into the forest after letting out a grunt.

It was afraid and had chosen to escape!

How would Fang Yuan let his ride escape so easily?

"You're not going anywhere!"

As he exclaimed, he leapt and landed on the back of the tiger. His hands became claws as he struck deep into the tiger's skin.

"Chi! Chi!"

"Roar! Roar!"

The white tiger was frenzied. It started to sprint and roll on the floor in an attempt to fling the person on its back away.

However, it was as though Fang Yuan was training a horse. He sat firmly on its back. Hearing the wind fly past him, he knew that the beast was carrying him forward.

After tumbling for half a day, the white tiger was exhausted as it started to pant.

"Does this mean that it's tamed?"

Fang Yuan patted its head, resulting in it turning its head back. It opened its jaws wide, and its eyes were fierce.

"Oh, I knew it..."

He sighed and started to become serious. As he pointed his finger out, a bewildering fog appeared, engulfing the white tiger.

The white tiger was already exhausted beyond means. As it was affected by the bewildering fog, it laid on the floor and entered a deep sleep.

From an outsiders view, Fang Yuan executed his dream master's technique and entered the giant tiger's dream, as he managed to catch a glimpse of its life.

From a weak tiger cub being fed by its mother to the sorrow it experienced as it was chased out from the cave to the hardships it endured trying to hunt on its own... Finally, the happiness it gained from ruling the forest and becoming king...

"Wait a moment!"

Fang Yuan picked up something different in the dream. "There's a human! This white tiger has seen a human before! There are signs of human life in this icy gorge!"

...

He had an excited look in his eyes as he opened them.

Purple Dream only knew everything up to the icy gorge. To journey towards Da Qian Empire, Fang Yuan had to explore the remaining journey on his own.

Therefore, the appearance of a human was a great help to him.

"Wuuuuu!"

At this point in time, the white tiger beneath him slowly opened its eyes. Looking at Fang Yuan, it no longer had the ferocious look it once had. In fact, it was trying to please Fang Yuan.

"Let's go! Towards the direction where the human has gone to!"

Fang Yuan commanded it without reservations. "As long as we reach there, I will roast any type of meat for you to enjoy!"

With this assurance, the white tiger was extremely excited. With a roar, it sprinted into the forest...

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